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THESIS

MENTORS IN THE CLASSROOM: AN EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS OF FACULTY MENTOR EXEMPLARS AT THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

by

Jeffrey R. Raithel

June 2002

Thesis Co-Advisors: Brad Johnson
Susan Hocevar

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This study investigated those beliefs and behaviors of exemplary faculty mentors for United States Naval Academy Midshipmen. The mission of the USNA is to develop young men and women morally, physically, and mentally. A clear task of the USNA faculty is to be the principle tool in the academic development of the midshipmen. However, the faculty is also in a unique position to be instrumental in the moral and character development of midshipmen. This thesis focused on the mentor–protégé relationship from the faculty mentor's perspective and attempted to identify those beliefs and behaviors common among effective faculty mentors.

The following five propositions are put forward as results of this study: 1) Exemplary mentors appear to have high emotional receptivity; 2) The primary motivation of exemplary mentors is a strong desire to help others; 3) Exemplary mentors appear to possess strong relationship skills and employ those skills in their educational techniques; 4) Organizational factors can inhibit or promote mentoring within an academic environment; 5) Civilian faculty do not feel they were less influential than military instructors. Regarding the midshipmen, this study suggests that midshipmen do experience mentoring although not necessarily according to the classical definition. Furthermore, midshipmen are more likely to be mentored by faculty members that participate in extra-curricular activities outside of the classroom.

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated those beliefs and behaviors of exemplary faculty mentors for United States Naval Academy Midshipmen. The mission of the USNA is to develop young men and women morally, physically, and mentally. A clear task of the USNA faculty is to be the principle tool in the academic development of the midshipmen. However, the faculty is also in a unique position to be instrumental in the moral and character development of midshipmen. This thesis focused on the mentor–protégé relationship from the faculty mentor's perspective and attempted to identify those beliefs and behaviors common among effective faculty mentors.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

On September 13, 1842, the American Brig *Somers***,** a training ship for teenage naval apprentice volunteers, sailed from the Brooklyn Navy Yard. During this cruise, Midshipman Philip Spencer, Boatswains Mate Samuel Cromwell, and Seaman Elisha Small were found guilty by a court of inquiry aboard ship of a conspiracy to commit a mutiny. All three were hanged. Although Spencer was not a typical midshipman, his case did illustrate the dangers of educating midshipmen outside of a traditional educational system (Sturdy, 1935).

Perhaps one of the things young Midshipmen Spencer lacked was a mentor. Unlike the Greek hero Odysseus, Midshipman Spencer's father had not arranged for a wiser, older guide named Mentor, to teach and counsel his son. Since not everyone has a friend like Mentor and since mentoring is generally seen as favorable, institutions often attempt to formalize and mandate the existence of mentor relationships. The creation of the Naval Academy was, at least in part, an attempt to ensure that young officers in training received concerted and thoughtful guidance.

The hanging of Midshipman Spencer was a major factor in the genesis of the United States Naval Academy (USNA). With the support of Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft, the school began on October 10, 1845 with a class of 50 midshipmen and 7 professors on the 10-acre Fort Severn in Annapolis, Maryland (Sturdy, 1935).

While the classroom curriculum focused on practical skills such as mathematics, navigation, and gunnery, part of the intent was to "develop" midshipmen into young professional officers. In fact, as the school's senior officer, Commander Buchanan instructed the first inductees, "every leisure moment must be used for acquiring professional proficiency" (Sturdy, 1935, p. 1373).

The current official mission of the Naval Academy codifies this implicit intent:

> To develop midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to provide graduates who are dedicated to a career of Naval service and have

> potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government (Allen, 2002, p. 1).

However, how does one "develop" another human being? Some physical development occurs due to natural maturation combined with diet and exercise. Physical development in a military environment can be measured with tests of strength, agility, and endurance. Mental development occurs through exposure to experiences and instruction (tasks), training (skills) and education (knowledge). Again, in a military environment, intellectual and skill-based development can be measured through examination. Moral development appears to be the greater challenge in that moral development presents fewer opportunities for quantifiable evaluation. How does one accomplish this within a classroom?

Certainly, instructors may lecture on exemplary leaders from the past. Reading assignments can focus on exemplary characters that portray the ideals the institution wishes to highlight. To a certain degree, the institution ensures that personal role models, such as coaches, faculty instructors, and company officers further highlight the types of behavior the organization wants its graduates to emulate. Many of these role models become personal mentors to students.

Upon examination, it appears that the Naval Academy, either intentionally or not, has developed a "facilitated mentoring environment" (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001) in order to develop future naval officers. Generally, the idea of a "facilitated mentoring environment" posits that an organization that creates a facilitated mentoring culture and conducts the intentional education of potential mentorship participants will yield more favorable results than an organization that mandates mentoring and assigns mentor-protégé pairings.

Two positive examples of potential mentors within the facilitated mentoring environment at USNA are the company officers and officer representatives to the midshipmen's athletic and social activities. In both cases, military officers assigned to USNA have an official administrative role to fulfill within the organization. Through association and proximity, the necessary conditions exist in which true mentor-protégé

relationships can develop. Further, both the officers and midshipmen are educated about mentoring and encouraged to reap the perceived advantages such mentoring appears to provide. In fact, the Commandant of Midshipmen at the USNA recently explicitly encouraged "the development of this relationship whenever and wherever possible" (Allen, 2002, p. 8).

A formalized program that may test the limits of the mentoring concept is the Naval Academy's Honor Remediation Program. Those midshipmen who violate the Honor Concept of the Brigade of Midshipmen, but are subsequently retained in the Brigade of Midshipmen participate in the Honor Remediation Program in an honor probation status. While in the Honor Remediation Program, the offending midshipmen is assigned to a senior military officer and placed in a formal mentoring environment wherein the midshipman is tasked to "exercise and improve moral reasoning abilities;" the offender is also provided "effective support and counsel from others who know and care about the individual midshipman" (http://www.usna.edu/CharacterDevelopment/honor/honorRemediation.html). Although USNA uses the term "mentor" here, it is unlikely that relationships in this formal program become long-term helping relationships.

In comparing the examples above, the primary difference is the way in which the mentor-protégé relationship is formed. In the case of company officer and officer representatives, the potential mentor-protégé relationship between the officer and the midshipman is allowed to develop informally. In the case of the honor remediation program, the mentor-protégé relationship is established formally. Research indicates that neither prospective mentors nor protégés prefer formalized mentoring programs (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001; Noe, 1988). While the accomplishment of specific tasks or the development of a specific skill can be completed in formalized programs, the formalized structure undermines the process of mutual attraction that underpins the formation and development of "successful" mentor-protégé relationships (Merriam, 1983).

Although each of the examples discussed thus far focus on the interaction between military officers assigned to the USNA and midshipmen, the Naval Academy is both a military institution and a university. USNA midshipmen spend the preponderance

of their time in academic pursuits, and because USNA allocates such a large amount of the midshipmen's time to the faculty, there is an institutional expectation for the faculty to be involved in not only the midshipmen's academic education but also their moral and ethical development. This thesis examined aspects of the faculty's role in midshipmen development within this facilitated mentoring environment. Specifically, this research explored the behaviors and beliefs of faculty who mentor midshipmen.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis was to identify and catalogue the most descriptive beliefs and behaviors among highly regarded mentor exemplars within the United States Naval Academy faculty. Specifically, the research focused on two broad areas: how do exceptional mentors conceptualize the mentoring task and mentoring relationships? and what do excellent mentors actually do in relation to protégés?

C. METHODOLOGY

This study hypothesized that, while long-term mentoring relationships between faculty and midshipmen students were rare, selected faculty consistently provide numerous mentoring functions to a diverse group of midshipmen. For example, certain faculty members consistently "look for opportunities to individually promote professional competence and identity formation" among midshipmen students (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001, p. 13), even if that is one professor with five different students per year for twenty years. The primary difference between traditional mentor-protégé relationships and those found at USNA is the duration of the relationship. Ten in-depth semi-structured interviews of peer-nominated exemplary mentors were used for the data set. Inductive, qualitative analysis of these interviews constituted the main approach to data analysis.

D. SCOPE, LIMITATIONS, AND ASSUMPTIONS

The scope of this research was to gain insight into the beliefs and behaviors of midshipmen mentors among the faculty at the USNA. This study was the first qualitative analysis of the mentors' experience. Few studies on mentoring and the military exist. Those studies that do exist tend to focus on the protégés' experience. Moreover, few of the existing studies have examined mentoring experiences at the military academies

generally, or the USNA specifically, suggesting a need for more research in this area. This study focused on the experiences of ten faculty members nominated by their peers as exemplary mentors.

A few limitations to this research should be noted: (1) There is some incongruence among definitions of mentoring within the academic world. (2) Although peer nominations were used to generate the interviewed population, the nomination response rate was low. (3) There is a limited period during which midshipmen can develop a traditional mentoring relationship while at the USNA. Although the mentoring relationship could last well after the midshipmen has graduated the USNA, the maximum duration for a face-to-face mentor-protégé relationship is four years. (4) This study is not experimental. (5) The interviewed faculty represents exemplary examples by design and do not, therefore, represent the general population; external validity of findings is unknown.

This study assumed that mentoring is defined as a relationship between two individuals, normally differing in age and prestige, wherein the mentor serves as a guide, role model, teacher, and counselor to develop the protégé (Jacobi, 1991). Furthermore, mentorship is generally viewed as beneficial to both the organization and the individuals involved (Jacobi, 1991; Kram, 1985). For the purpose of this study, protégé is defined as the recipient of the mentor's time, attention, counsel and advice, regardless of the duration. The study assumed that each respondent answered the interview questions truthfully and accurately.

E. BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

The results of this study can provide the United States Naval Academy (USNA) with insights regarding the prototypical beliefs and behaviors of outstanding mentors among the faculty. The results allow the author to offer recommendations for continuing to improve the development of the facilitated mentoring environment.

F. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The following chapters address faculty mentoring of USNA midshipmen from the mentor's perspective. Chapter II presents a literature review that traces the study of

mentoring from the psychological, business, and education perspectives with a focus on the mentor-protégé relationship in education. Chapter III discusses the methodology used in the study. Chapter IV provides the results of the procedure used to analyze the qualitative data along with supporting quotations from the interviews. Chapter V presents the conclusions of the study, and offers recommendations for future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. OVERVIEW

This chapter focuses on the development of mentoring within education. Since the 1978 publication of Levinson's *Seasons of a Man's Life,* researchers in education, management and psychology have increasingly been interested in the subject of mentoring. During February 2002, a cursory search of the keyword *mentor* in the ERIC database resulted in 2098 individual returns. Yet despite the increase in the study and publication on the subject, no consensus on the definition of mentoring has yet formed. While the focus of the majority of mentor research has been on management in the business world, many research findings are applicable across disciplines. Although subject to a diverse array of definitions, "mentorship" can be generally defined as a relationship between two individuals, normally differing in age and prestige, wherein the mentor serves as a guide, role model, teacher, and counselor to develop the protégé (Jacobi, 1991). Furthermore, mentorship is generally viewed as beneficial to both the organization and the individuals involved (Jacobi, 1991; Kram, 1985).

While the United States Naval Academy (USNA) has a stated goal to develop midshipmen morally, mentally and physically, and has a systematic process to achieve that goal, little research has been conducted to study informal mentorship within the military generally, and the Naval Academy particularly. Two studies of USNA midshipmen (Baker, 2001; Johnson, Lall, Holmes, Huwe, & Nordlund, 2001) demonstrated that a significant portion of the population considered themselves to have been mentored during their time at the Academy. Yet these studies, like the preponderance of research on mentoring, focused exclusively on the protégé.

This literature review will examine mentoring in the worlds of business, social psychology, and education, with a focus on the mentor and mentoring in education. The review culminates in a summary of previous research on mentoring at USNA.

The Concept of Mentoring

Kanter's 1977 book, *Men and Women of the Corporation,* was an early work in the field of management that first highlighted the relationship between a sponsor, a

mentor, and success in business. Kram and other researchers (Kram, 1985; Noe, 1988; Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, Feren, 1988;) worked in the 1980s to further classify the concepts Kanter brought forward. Kram and other researchers generally codified the relationship between mentors and protégés into two basic categories. Although differing terminology was used, two basic categories of mentor functions were defined: career or vocational functions and psychosocial functions. Career or vocational functions generally pertain to the job and career benefits extended to the protégé through the education and brokering the mentor provides, whereas psychosocial functions generally pertain to emotional support generated through the relationship (Kram, 1985; Olian et al., 1988). The present study will use these two broad functions as the baseline for categorization of the beliefs and behaviors of the interviewed mentors. However, an additional function, role modeling, will be added based on the research of Burke (1984) and Jacobi (1991).

At about the same time that Kanter was conducting her groundbreaking research on mentoring in the business world, Levinson and his team of researchers published *Seasons of a Man's Life* (Levinson, D.J., Darrow, Klein, Levinson, M. H., & McKee, 1978). In this book on adult development, Levinson argued that individuals' lives consisted of an underlying structure comprised of relationships with others, both individually (such as siblings, spouse, employer) and collectively (groups and organizations). Over time, individuals experienced stable periods and transition periods wherein developmental change was required to adapt to the environment. The role of the mentor in the development of the protégé into early adulthood was to serve as a caring older sibling, providing role modeling, advice, and counsel.

After completing an exhaustive review of existing literature, Jacobi (1991) summarized the foundational elements common to effective mentoring relationships. They are:

> 1) Mentoring relationships are helping relationships usually focused on achievement. 2) Mentors provide any or all of three broad components a) emotional and psychological support, b) direct assistance with career and professional development, and c) role modeling. 3) Mentoring relationships benefit both parties reciprocally. 4) Mentoring relationships are personal. 5) Relative to their protégés, mentors show greater

> experience, influence and achievement within a particular organization or environment. (p. 513)

B. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Jacobi (1991) pointed out that one of the problems underlying the difficulty in studying mentoring relative to academic success is the lack of a unifying theory. Generally, researchers have followed design strategies based on one of the four following concepts.

1. Learning Involvement Theory

The first group argues that academic success is directly proportional to the student's involvement in the educational process (Astin, 1977; Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education, 1984). Under this model, the mentor's role is to encourage the protégés' involvement in learning. The mentor would generate opportunities for learning, such as research assistantships. The Mathematics department at the United States Naval Academy is one of several academic departments that operate an honors math program that appears to follow this model. (http://www.usna.edu/MathDept/website/Mids/Honors.htm). In this type of program, the mentor stresses professional development over psychosocial support (Jacobi, 1991).

2. Academic and Social Integration Theory

The second model is similar to the first, but is more concerned with predicting and preventing attrition from the educational environment. Adapting a predictive model developed by Tinto (1975), researchers pursuing this line of reasoning argue that students that not only commit themselves to the educational process and the institution, but also integrate into both the academic and social environment will be more likely to graduate (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1977; Terenzini, Pascarella, Theophilides, & Lorang, 1985; Terenzini & Wright, 1987). Following this model, the role of the mentor is to promote the student's integration into the organization by primarily providing psychosocial support in the form of acceptance, validation, and friendship (Jacobi, 1991). At the United States Naval Academy, the Midshipmen Black Studies Club is an example of a social organization following this model. (http://www.usna.edu/MidActivities /activity.html).

3. Social Support Theory

The third model, like the second, is focused on protégé's psychological and emotional well-being. The social support theory emphasizes the mentor's role in helping the protégé deal with stress through avoidance, coping, or prevention (Jacobi, 1991). The United States Naval Academy's Midshipman Development Center is an example of an organization founded in social support theory (http://www.usna.edu/MDC/).

4. Developmental Support

The fourth model draws from concepts outlined in adult development theory (Chickering, 1969; Levinson et al., 1978; Perry, 1970). Although each developmental school of thought has differences, the developmental model requires the mentor to maintain flexibility and adaptability in each of the three broad mentor functioning areas (professional support, emotional support, and role modeling) in order to help the protégé (Jacobi, 1991). Although difficult to measure in quantifiable terms, the developmental support model is the most balanced approach and is the model that underpins the basic assumptions of this study.

C. WHY STUDY MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS?

Much of the interest in mentoring arises from anecdotal stories of individuals' success premised on mentoring. Philosophic, music, and military history all have premiere examples of successful mentor-protégé relationships. Socrates and Plato, Haydn and Beethoven, Conner and Eisenhower are just three of numerous famous examples. However, a review of the research literature indicates that mentoring has benefits for even average protégés, their mentors, and their organizations.

1. Protégé

For the protégé, increased job satisfaction, higher promotion rates, and increased productivity, as well as having an opportunity to address personal, social, and family concerns would be included on a summary list of benefits the protégé receives (Johnson & Nelson, 1999; Johnson, et al. 2001; Kram, 1985).

However, Jacobi (1991) pointed out that there is some problem with many researchers' results regarding "success." In the majority of qualitative and quantitative mentoring studies that Jacobi reviewed, she found that the researchers had either stated or implied that the research subjects were successful because they had a mentor. However, this causal relationship has not been clearly supported by the research findings. Based on Zey's (1984) list of qualities that a mentor looks for in a protégé, it is possible that the protégé would have succeeded without the mentorship. Zey's list included traits such as intelligence, ambition, professional drive, loyalty, practical organizational understanding, and the ability to establish alliances.

2. Mentor

Although researchers disagree as to exactly why mentors "volunteer" to fulfill that role, research indicates that the mentor generally receives both tangible and intrinsic rewards. In her study in the management field, Kram (1985) found that the tangible rewards of mentoring provided the dominant explanation for this behavior. Tangible rewards include peer esteem, possible monetary compensation, assistance on projects of interest to the mentor, and increased professional visibility (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Johnson & Nelson, 1999). However, in both the academic and business worlds, because of the personal investment of time by the mentor in the protégé, there seems also to be evidence for the importance of intrinsic or intangible rewards. Building on Zey's (1984) four fundamental concepts as a basis, other researchers have theorized that mentors receive four basic benefits from mentoring: a) career enhancement by building a power base (Phillips-Jones, 1982), b) intelligence/information wherein subordinates serve as a critical source of information for the mentor (Mullen, 1994), c) the advisory role or the "satisfaction that comes from passing knowledge and skills on to others" (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997, p. 73), and d) the psychic rewards such as the invigoration of new ideas and perspective the protégé provides (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997).

3. Organization

The organization benefits too. Both Kram (1985) and Zey (1984) noted that mentored employees tended to demonstrate increased efficiency. This increased efficiency may have occurred due to the employees' better understanding of their role in the organization and their ability to communicate among and between organizational

levels of power. Given the psychological and social support the mentor provides, the protégé often experiences less stress in the workplace (Kram, 1985). Additionally, since the protégé enjoys the relationship with the mentor, the employee is more likely to extend to the entire organization the personal loyalty initially given to the mentor (Buhler, 1998). Buhler (1998) also found that protégés assimilated into the organizational culture faster than non-mentored peers did. Finally, mentoring within an organization helps that organization identify and develop the organization's future leaders. The most skilled employees are evaluated, identified and developed to the benefit of both the company and the protégé (Buhler, 1998).

D. FORMAL VS. INFORMAL

Kram (1985) noted that organizational structure could either promote or retard the creation of mentoring relationships. Kram (1985) identified reward systems, individual or team-based work assignments, performance evaluation systems and the organization's culture as influential factors in the development of mentoring relationships.

In short, because effective mentoring is premised upon the concept of mutual attraction and cooperation, formally assigned mentor programs are not recommended (Merriam, 1983). In most formalized programs the mentor's role is normally to focus on helping the protégé complete a specific assignment or develop a specific skill (Noe, 1988). The mentor's role is that of an advisor, teacher, or instructor. As Hardy (1994) points out however, "mentoring is different from advising because it involves a personal relationship" (p. 198).

Research indicates that a facilitated mentoring environment produces a situation wherein faculty-student relationships can develop into mentor-protégé relationships. A facilitated-learning environment is one in which the institution creates a mentoring culture and conducts the intentional education of potential mentorship participants (both mentors and protégés) (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001; Bonilla, Pickron, & Tatum, 1994).

E. MENTOR CHARACTERISTICS

1. The Typical Mentor

Just as there is no standardized definition for "mentoring," there is also no consensus for what a model mentor or protégé should look like. Age appears to be a less

effective predictor of mentor success than relative experience. Although Levinson, et al. (1978) described the typical mentor as eight to fifteen years senior to the protégé and Kram (1985) and Zey (1984) both indicated that mentors were "older" than their protégé, more recent research suggests that actual age difference is not important. Phillips-Jones (1982) stated that mentors could be of any age provided they were capable of performing the roles and responsibilities of a mentor. The current interest in peer mentorship programs further underscores this idea (Baker, 2001; Bonilla, Pickron, & Tatum, 1994).

Likewise, significant debate continues over the role of mentor gender and race. Because research indicates that both mentors and protégés seek individuals that reflect their own beliefs, values, and viewpoints, the fact that the faculty, staff, and student population of the Naval Academy is overwhelmingly white and male presents a concern for minority students and women (Mehlman & Glickauf-Hughes, 1994). Erkut and Mokros (1984) found that females preferred same-sex mentors. However, Olian et al. (1988) found no gender preference was displayed in their research. To further confuse the debate, Noe (1988) found that cross-gender protégés made more effective use of their mentor's time. Kram (1985) effectively summarized the situation when she pointed out that cross-gender relationships create unique opportunities and risks.

The ideal mentor can be "described as someone that is willing to share knowledge and understanding in order to offer sound advice and counsel, has advanced rank, is respected by peers, is altruistic, ethical, and serves as a strong positive role model" (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001, p. 3). Additionally, protégés generally report the following personality characteristics as favorable: "humorous, honest, dedicated, empathetic, compassionate, genuine, patient, nonsexist, flexible, loyal" (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001, p. 3).

2. The Costs of Mentoring

Although mentoring is generally viewed as positive, it is not without costs to the mentor. The time cost invested in the protégé is perhaps the most substantial cost. However, that investment is usually beneficial to all parties involved. Less obvious, but equally important costs that must be considered by the prospective mentor include embarrassment if the protégé fails, the potential damage to the mentor's professional

reputation based on the protégés performance if poor, and protégé disloyalty (Raggins & Scandura, 1994). Additionally, jealousy from non-mentored members can create stress in the organization. In organizations such as the Naval Academy that have small minority faculty populations, the increased ratio of potential protégés to the available pool of mentors coupled with the additional responsibilities to serve as ethnic or women's representatives creates unique challenges (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001).

F. DURATION AND PHASES

Although a few researchers, such as Phillips-Jones (1982), have suggested that mentoring can occur in a single encounter, the vast majority of researchers posit that the relationship is extended over time, ranging from two to twenty years, and changes as it passes through distinct phases (Johnson, Lall, Huwe, Fallow, Holmes, & Hall, 1999; Kram, 1985; Levinson, 1978; O'Neil & Wrightsman, 1981; Phillips-Jones, 1982). Kram (1985) described four distinct phases through which the relationship passes. They are: a) initiation, b) cultivation, c) separation, and d) redefinition. While Kram prescribed specific time windows to each stage, other researchers have found similar stages occurring without regard to time.

Just as there is much disagreement over the age difference between the mentor and protégé, the required duration of the mentoring relationship is also debatable. Kram (1985) assigned definite time windows to her four phases of mentoring relationships. Each phase window lasted anywhere from six months to 5 years. Her research supported general observations made by Levinson, et al. (1978). However, due to the nature of the educational environment, Kram's phases of relationship development (1983) often occur at a faster pace. In an educational environment, mentoring relationships often last from one to four years (Baker, 2001; Johnson, et al., 2001).

Regardless of the specific duration, Kram's (1985) four phases provide a solid basis for the study of relationship formation. The relationship begins with an initiation phase. During this stage, the mentor and protégé each are testing the waters for similar interests and compatibility. Next, the relationship is cultivated and grows as both parties work together toward collective goals. Separation indicates the first major change in the relationship. This change can be either positive or negative, but reflects the protégé is

operating independently without the guidance or the assistance of the mentor. The relationship then moves into a final stage: redefinition. That redefinition may take the form of equal friendship or it may reflect the growth of the protégé into a competitor for the former mentor.

G. USNA STUDIES

To date, only two previous studies have researched mentoring at the USNA. The Johnson, et al., (2001) study explored the "prevalence of mentor relationships experiences among 576 third year midshipmen" (p 27). The study found that 40% of the 62% of the class that responded reported having had at least one significant mentor relationship. Furthermore, consistent with other research, the study found that most mentors were male (87%), the relationship was mutually initiated, and lasted for several years. Additionally, the midshipmen reported that the majority of mentors were senior military personnel (60%). Midshipmen reported that the psychosocial functions the mentor provided were most valued. Overall, the surveyed midshipmen reported their mentoring relationships as extremely positive and viewed mentoring as important.

During 2000, Baker (2001) conducted a survey of 1368 midshipmen to determine: a) the prevalence of mentoring at the USNA, b) the midshipmen's satisfaction with those mentoring relationships, c) the characteristics and functions of mentors, and d) the process and duration of mentoring relationships. Baker's sample population contained midshipmen from each of the four-year groups at USNA. His study found: a) that midshipmen's satisfaction with the USNA was positively related to having a mentor; b) that over 45% of the surveyed midshipmen reported having a mentor; c) that female midshipmen were more likely to be mentored than their male counterparts; and d) that USNA mentors were typically senior Caucasian male officers (41.6%), followed by civilian mentors (30.3%), and then midshipmen peers (28.1%). . Of greatest interest were Baker's findings that midshipmen used peer mentors, were more likely to mentor others if they had been mentored, and were more likely to serve in leadership positions if they were mentored (Baker, 2001).

One other research project worth mentioning is the 1999 survey of retired Navy admirals (Johnson, et al. 1999). Although not focused on the USNA, this study reflects

the outcomes of long-term mentoring relationships among USNA graduates and other Navy officers. This study surveyed 1,350 retired flag officers and received 691 responses for a 51.1% response rate. The respondents were nearly exclusively white males, with 58% being USNA graduates. Two-thirds of the respondents reported having been mentored during their careers, averaging three mentoring relationships during their careers. Three-quarters reported that the relationship was either mutually initiated or started by the senior. Again, consistent with other research, the respondents reported being identified as "front runners" and then received professional and personal support to help achieve their goals. Additionally, the respondents reported that their relationship with their mentor evolved over time, generally resulting in a lifelong friendship that continued until the mentor's death. Finally, the admirals overwhelmingly endorsed educating officers and encouraging mentoring within organizations, but warned against installing a formalized system. One point of interest was that "younger" admirals were more likely to report having been mentored than "older" admirals were. The researchers suggest that the cause for this may be that "mentoring" is a relatively new concept and so those more recently retired were more familiar with the concept.

H. CURRENT MENTORING PROGRAMS AT USNA

Currently at USNA, three basic types of undergraduate mentoring programs are ongoing. The first type is a reward-based program for academic excellence. Collectively these programs are honors programs that allow exceptional students to conduct advanced research and study or participate in graduate education programs. The Trident Scholars Program is one example. The Trident Scholars Program is summarized below:

> The United States Naval Academy Trident Scholar Program provides an opportunity for midshipmen in the top 10 percent of their class to conduct advanced research during their senior year. Since 1963, the number of scholars participating in independent study has ranged from three to a sixteen midshipmen, with fourteen scholars in the Class of 2002.
>
> Each scholar has one or more Naval Academy faculty advisors. Those advisors serve as research mentors to the scholar. Scholars may request to have scientists and area specialists from neighboring laboratories or universities serve as consultants for their research efforts as well.

> Trident Scholars frequently present their research results at local, regional and national meetings of their discipline. Several co-author presentations, journal articles or submit patents with their faculty mentors. Statistically, Trident Scholars promote to O-6 (Captain) at a higher rate than their Academy classmates do. Over thirty of the previous Trident Scholars with the requisite years of Naval Service have been promoted to the rank of Captain and nine have reached the rank of Admiral. (http://www.usna.edu/TridentProgram/ Revision Date 15 February 2002)

This program exemplifies the concept of the facilitated mentoring environment. Simply stated, the prospective protégé is allowed to seek out and select the faculty member that will serve as a research advisor and potential mentor. Secondly, the time invested and proximity of working on a topic of mutual interest provides the catalyst for a true informal mentoring relationship to develop. The mentor is imparting professional knowledge, is modeling behavior as an instructor, and provides social and psychological support throughout the project.

A second approach to formalized mentoring for midshipmen is a product of the punishment system. One example is the Naval Academy's Honor Remediation Program. This program is for those midshipmen who violate the Honor Concept of the Brigade of Midshipmen, but are subsequently retained in the Brigade of Midshipmen. Violators participate in the Honor Remediation Program in an honor probation status. While in the Honor Remediation Program, the offending midshipmen is placed in a formal mentoring environment wherein the midshipman is tasked to "exercise and improve moral reasoning abilities" and is provided "effective support and counsel from others who know and care about the individual midshipman" (http://www.usna.edu/CharacterDevelopment/honor/ honorRemediation.html). More specifically, the Academy's formal program states that the mentoring relationship provides an excellent opportunity to enhance a midshipman's moral and ethical development. Specifically, the program states that:

> The mentor-midshipman relationship is one of a "reflective practicum." This practicum consists of a periodic discussion between teacher and student, one in which counseling is followed by periods of individual work and reflection. The mentor will meet with their assigned midshipman at least once per week to discuss and evaluate that midshipman's progress and development. (http://www.usna.edu/CharacterDevelopment/honor/ /honorRemediation.html Revised: Mon, Aug 27, 2001).

While the Honor Remediation Program is very structured and the mentors are carefully screened, the current system does not allow either the protégé or the mentor any active participation in the pairing assignment.

The third category of mentoring at USNA is most representative of the facilitated mentoring approach. This category is exemplified in the current informal relationship structure between the midshipmen and the faculty and staff. The USNA assigns a commissioned officer to each company of midshipmen to perform certain administrative duties. Each extracurricular activity, be it a sport, hobby, or social club has an officer representative assigned to perform certain administrative duties. Both of these administrative requirements create "an atmosphere which increases the probability of mentor relationship formation without forced or required mentor-protégé matching" (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001, p 11).

I. SUMMARY

In summary, the purpose of the Naval Academy is to develop future naval officers morally, mentally, and physically. This goal is accomplished through a variety of formal and informal systems. This study attempted to explore the beliefs and behaviors of particularly effective faculty mentors. The expected beliefs and behaviors include the idea that mentoring is a relationship of any duration between two individuals, normally differing in age and prestige, wherein the mentor serves as a guide, role model, and counselor to develop the protégé. The mentor invests his or her person, resources, and time in the relationship for the intrinsic rewards that mentoring provides, although mentoring does often provide extrinsic rewards as well. Mentoring is founded in a number of human developmental theories. Mentoring appears to play a key role in leadership development. Since the mission of the Naval Academy is to develop leaders, studying the mentoring process is crucial to enhance our understanding of leadership development.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. OVERVIEW

The researcher used 10 semi-structured interviews to explore the beliefs and behaviors of peer-nominated exemplary faculty mentors. The primary research question was "What are the most descriptive beliefs and behaviors among highly regarded mentor exemplars within the USNA faculty?" Specifically, the research focused on two broad areas: a) how do exceptional mentors conceptualize the mentoring task and the nature of the mentoring relationships, and b) what do excellent mentors actually do in relation to protégés? The long-term goal of this research is to suggest ways in which informal faculty-student mentoring can be improved at USNA.

The overall methodology used in this thesis consisted of the following steps:

1. Conducted a thorough literature review of the theory and research on mentoring with a focus on mentoring within the academic community.

2. Used a purposeful sampling technique to select exemplar faculty mentors.

3. Conducted interviews with selected USNA faculty, from various departments, who were identified as exemplary mentors via peer-nominated sampling.

4. Analyzed interview data for themes using qualitative inductive data analysis procedures.

5. Discussed results with emphasis on narrative examples of major themes.

B. SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

1. Procedure

A purposeful sampling strategy was employed to identify exemplar faculty mentors (Patton, 1990). To begin, a research proposal was submitted to and approved by the United States Naval Academy Institutional Research Department.

At USNA, there are 18 academic departments housed in four academic divisions. Full professors from each academic department, department chairs and division heads from each academic department and division, as well as academic military

faculty designated as "Master Instructor" were asked to nominate colleagues whom they considered to be unusually "effective" undergraduate mentors. For this study, 218 faculty members representing 40.67% of the faculty, were asked to nominate exceptional mentors to midshipmen from among their peers and associates (see Table 1). Self-nominations were not discouraged.

Because the Division of Professional Development is nearly exclusively staffed by military personal, military faculty with the designator "Assistant Professor" or military faculty with the rank of Lieutenant Commander or above were polled in this division. Foreign military visiting instructors were excluded from the group. Table 2 highlights the sampling frame for nominators in the current study by gender, department, division and military or civilian status:

Table 1. Nominating Pool expressed by percentage

USNA DIVISIONS AND DEPARTMENT FACULTY			
Staffing as of 31 October 2001	Total in target nominating group	Total number of faculty per Div/Dept	As a Percentage
Division of Engineering and Weapons	1	2	50.00%
Department			
Aerospace Engineering	9	14	64.29%
Electrical Engineering	5	25	20.00%
Mechanical Engineering	13	42	30.95%
Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering	11	20	55.00%
Weapons and Systems Engineering	12	37	32.43%
Division of Humanities and Social Sciences	0	2	0%
Department			
Economics	6	18	33.33%
English	20	33	60.61%
History	18	46	39.13%
Language Studies	9	27	33.33%
Political Science	11	25	44.00%
Division of Mathematics and Science	2	2	100%
Department			
Chemistry	8	40	20.00%
Computer Science	3	13	23.08%
Mathematics	41	64	64.06%
Oceanography	4	13	30.77%
Physics	15	32	46.88%
Division of Professional Development	0	3	0%
Department			
Leadership, Ethics and Law (LEL)	22	32	68.75%
Professional Programs	2	9	22.22%
Seamanship and Navigation	3	37	8.11%
OTHER	3	0	0%
TOTAL	218	536	40.67%

Table 2. Nominating Pool

USNA DIVISIONS AND DEPARTMENT FACULTY											
	Nominating Group*							Total Faculty assigned by Department		
	Professors		Master Instr		Others		Total			
Staffing as of 31 October 2002	M	F	M	F	M	F		CIV	MIL	Total
Division of Engineering and Weapons			1				1		2	2
Department										
Aerospace Engineering	8				1		9	8	6	14
Electrical Engineering	2	2			1		5	11	14	25
Mechanical Engineering	11		2				13	27	15	42
Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering	7	4					11	12	8	20
Weapons and Systems Engineering	3	9					12	15	22	37
Division of Humanities and Social Sciences									2	2
Department										
Economics	4	1			1		6	14	4	18
English	12	5	2	1			20	24	9	33
History	9	3	4	2			18	30	16	46
Language Studies	3	6					9	24	3	27
Political Science	5	4	2				11	17	8	25
Division of Mathematics and Science			1		1		2		2	2
Department										
Chemistry	6	1	1				8	33	7	40
Computer Science	1		2				3	7	6	13
Mathematics	29	2	10				41	47	17	64
Oceanography	2		1		1		4	6	7	13
Physics	9	2	4				15	24	8	32
Division of Professional Development									3	3
Department										
Leadership, Ethics and Law (LEL)	1				18	3	22	9	23	32
Professional Programs					2		2		9	9
Seamanship and Navigation			1		2		3	4	33	37
Other					1	2	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	112	39	31	3	28	5	218	312	224	536

"Professors" refers to the number of full civilian professors; "Master Instr" refers to the number of military instructors with the academic rank of "master instructor;" "Other" refers to other faculty members, such as department or division heads who were included in the nominating group but excluded from either the "professor" or "master instructor" category.

From the pool identified in the tables above, the nominating group (N = 218) was asked to nominate one exemplary mentor from among any faculty member teaching at the U.S. Naval Academy. Nominations were solicited via e-mail. The e-mail request included a brief statement as to the purpose of the research and provided general

guidelines for nominations (see Appendix B). Faculty within the nominating group were not discouraged from self-nomination.

Table 3. Nominations received by Department and Division

USNA DIVISIONS AND DEPARTMENT FACULTY							
	Nominations Received					Nominating Faculty Pool by Department	
	Civilian		Military		Total		
Nominations as of 15 March 2002	M	F	M	F		Total	%
Division of Engineering and Weapons					0	1	0
Department							
Aerospace Engineering					0	9	0
Electrical Engineering					0	5	0
Mechanical Engineering		1			1	13	7.69
Naval Architecture and Ocean Engineering					0	11	0
Weapons and Systems Engineering			1		1	12	8.33
Division of Humanities and Social Sciences					0		0
Department							
Economics	1				1	6	16.67
English					0	20	0
History	1	1			2	18	11.11
Language Studies					0	9	0
Political Science	1				1	11	9.09
Division of Mathematics and Science					0	2	0
Department							
Chemistry					0	8	0
Computer Science			1		1	3	33.33
Mathematics	2		1		3	41	7.32
Oceanography			1		1	4	25
Physics	1	1			2	15	13.33
Division of Professional Development					0		0
Department							
Leadership, Ethics and Law (LEL)	1		2	0	3	22	13.64
Professional Programs					0	2	0
Seamanship and Navigation					0	3	0
					0	3	0
TOTAL	7	3	6	0	16	218	7.34

2. Participants

As depicted in Table 3 above, 16 nominations were received for a response rate of 7.34%. In seven of the 16 nominations, the nominating faculty qualified the nomination by providing additional background information relating to the nominated member's mentoring experience. Based on the findings of the Jennings and Skovholt's study

(1999), the researcher elected to use $N = 10$ in order to achieve a balance between breadth and depth. Of the 16 nominations, the researcher rejected one to avoid a conflict of interest and the three self-nominations were rejected in order to limit selection bias. The remaining 12 faculty members were invited to participate as interview subjects. One faculty member declined to participate. One faculty member was unavailable during the research period. The remaining ten faculty members, 3 women, 7 men (3 military, 7 civilian) agreed to participate.

C. INSTRUMENTATION

1. Semi structured Interview

The principle investigating method was a semi-structured interview questionnaire consisting of 14 open-ended questions (see Table 4). The list of questions was derived in part from Jennings' and Skovholt's (1999) research on master psychotherapists. The interview questions from that study were modified based on a literature review of mentoring to elicit information concerning the beliefs and behaviors of exemplary USNA faculty mentors to midshipmen. All interviews were audio taped. Before each interview, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and each respondent signed an informed consent form (see Appendix A).

Once the ten faculty members were selected and agreed to participate in the study, the author conducted one-on-one personal interviews. Interview duration ranged from 35 minutes to 85 minutes, with a median time of 50 minutes. Each participant read and signed a one-page consent form that outlined the purpose and timeframe of the study. The form also explained the need for audio taping and subsequent transcription of the interviews; however, the form also explained that confidentiality would be maintained (see Appendix a).

The interview sessions consisted of a semi-structured interview using 14 open-ended questions (see Table 4 below). This list of questions was adapted from Jennings and Skovholt's study of master psychotherapists (Jennings & Skovholt, 1999, p. 5). The interview questions from that study were modified based on a literature review of mentoring. The questions were designed to elicit information concerning the beliefs and behaviors of exemplary USNA faculty mentors to midshipmen. Additional questions

were asked to encourage interviewees to expand on ideas or clarify answers as required. All interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed for use in data analysis. After the transcripts were completed, the researcher read each transcript while listening to the interview tape in order to ensure transcription accuracy. Respondents were provided the list of questions before the interview (see Table 4).

Table 4. Interview Questions for Mentor Exemplars[1]

1. Briefly state how long you have been at USNA and what your basic administrative duties are.
2. Given the operational definition that mentoring is a sustained, mutually reinforcing personal relationship between a mentor and a protégé characterized by the professional and personal development of the protégé, describe what mentoring means to you.
3. What distinguishes a good mentor from a good instructor?
4. What do you think are the characteristics of an exemplary mentor?
5. Does one need years of experience to be an exemplary mentor?
6. How are you different from when you started your career?
7. Given two experienced professors, why is one sought out by midshipmen as a mentor while the other is not?
8a. Does mentoring ever become difficult or stressful for you?
8b. How have you responded when there is stress or conflict in a mentorship?
9. What is particularly "exemplary" about you?
10. Is there one distinguishing aspect of your mentoring expertise?
11a. Were you mentored?
11b. If so, by whom?
11c. What were the key benefits of that mentoring?
11d. What were the key characteristics of that mentor?
12. How do you know when you are doing a good job with a student, both academically and/or personally/professionally?
13. How do you select protégés?
14. If there were a recipe for making an exemplary mentor, what ingredients would you include?

D. FIELD PROCEDURES

Respondents were provided a copy of the informed consent form (see Appendix A) and the interview questions before the interview. Interviews were conducted in either the respondent's office or the researcher's office, based on the respondent's preference.

[1] Questions are adapted from Jennings & Skovholt, 1999, p. 5.

Respondents were instructed that the interview questions addressed both specific mentoring interactions with USNA midshipmen and general issues regarding mentoring.

E. DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

Content analysis was used to analyze the interview data (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Patton, 1990). First, each interview question was analyzed and similar responses were grouped, analyzed, and reported. Then general themes were addressed as they related to the research irrespective of the specific question that prompted the response. The themes that developed related to the faculties beliefs and behaviors regarding midshipmen mentoring, the functions of mentoring, and the role of formal and informal mentoring.

Using inductive analysis (Patton, 1990), the researcher grouped interview comments with others similar in meaning. Once grouped, a generalized section title was given to each group. Throughout the process, the researcher attempted to identify how responses related to one of three broad subject areas: Vocational/Career, Psychosocial, or Role Model. These broad subject areas correlate to the categories that other researchers (e.g., Burke, 1984; Kram, 1985; Noe, 1988; Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, Feren, 1988) generally use to codify the relationship between mentors and protégés. That code consists of two basic categories of mentor functions: career or vocational functions and psychosocial functions. Career or vocational functions generally pertain to the job and career benefits extended to the protégé through the education and brokering the mentor provides, whereas psychosocial functions generally pertain to emotional support generated through the relationship (Kram, 1985; Olian et al., 1988). The additional function, role modeling, was added based on the research of Burke (1984) and Jacobi (1991).

Although the researcher attempted to identify common beliefs and behaviors, individual or unique comments were not rejected. As this was an initial inquiry into faculty mentors at USNA, single, stand-alone comments made by one subject were not deleted and are identified as unique where appropriate.

Within these four broad categories, the researcher grouped comments into factors. The researcher used the results of Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs' (1997) qualitative study of

mentors to assist in the development of the factors used in this study. While the researcher did not use the same interview instrument as Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, both this study and their research explored similar areas.

F. LIMITATIONS

The overall low response rate to the initial request for nominees undermines the premise that the nominees put forward were truly "exemplary." While the purposeful random sampling strategy used to identify the interview participants adds credibility and reduces selection bias, the study has limited external validity as the sample is not necessarily representative of exemplary undergraduate mentors (Patton, 1990).

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

A. INTRODUCTION

The following chapter presents the results of the data collection and analysis. First, demographic and statistical data are provided for the interviewed population. Second, an analysis of interview responses by question is provided with selected quotes from the respondents as a "raw data" illustration. Quotations are not attributed to the source. Finally, a summary section addresses the main themes and groupings of exemplary mentor beliefs and behaviors at USNA.

Throughout this chapter, ellipses (i.e. …) are used to indicate where the author removed material from the verbatim transcript. Two hyphens (i.e. --) are used to indicate where the respondent either changed his or her line of thought during the interview or trailed off the end of a sentence.

B. DEMOGRAPHIC AND STATISTICAL DATA

1. Demographics

a. Departments represented by Interviewed Professors

The ten respondents represented eight of the 18 (44.44%) academic departments at USNA. At least one representative from each of the four academic divisions participated in the study. The following departments were represented by professors in the study: (in alphabetical order by department) Computer Science; Economics; History (two respondents); Leadership, Ethics, and Law; Political Science; Physics; Mathematics (two respondents); and Mechanical Engineering,

b. Civilian-Military mixture

Three active duty commissioned officers of the United States Navy and United States Marine Corps were represented in the study. The remaining seven respondents were full-time civilian faculty members.

c. Gender

Three female faculty members participated in the study. The remaining seven instructors were male.

d. Education Level

Eight of the ten participants held Doctoral Degrees in their field of study. One participant held a Master's Degree and the final participant was active in a Master's Degree program.

2. Statistical data

Table 5. Responses to Interview Questions

	Prof A	Prof B	Prof C	Prof D	Prof E	Prof F	Prof G	Prof H	Prof J	Prof K	
Questions											Totals
Asked Q1?	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	10/10
Asked Q2?	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	10/10
Asked Q3?	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	10/10
Asked Q4?	T	F	T	T	F	T	T	F	T	T	7/10
Asked Q5?	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	10/10
Asked Q6?	T	T	T	F	T	T	T	T	T	T	9/10
Asked Q7?	T	F	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	9/10
Asked Q8?	T	T	T	T	T	F	T	T	T	T	9/10
Asked Q9?	T	T	T	T	T	F	T	T	T	T	9/10
Asked Q10?	F	F	F	F	F	F	T	F	F	F	1/10
Asked Q11?	T	T	T	T	T	F	T	F	T	T	8/10
Asked Q12?	T	T	T	F	T	T	T	F	T	T	8/10
Asked Q13?	T	T	T	T	F	T	F	T	T	T	8/10
Asked Q14?	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	F	T	9/10

Table 6 reports whether a question from the semi-structured interview questions (see Table 4) was asked during the interview session.

A value of "T" means the question was asked. A value of "F" means the question was not directly asked; however, the question may have been answered during a response to another question. Such questions are identified in the transcripts by italicized text.

By the fourth interview, responses to Question 10 were so redundant to responses to Question 9 that Question 10 thereafter was not expressly asked.

C. INTERVIEW RESULTS BY QUESTION

During the conduct of the interviews, interview respondents gave responses to all questions asked, but did not always "answer" the question. In this section, only "answers" are reported.

1. Question 1 (Duration at USNA)

Generally, how long have you been here and what are your general responsibilities administratively?

All participants were asked this question. "**Time at USNA**" in Table 6 below refers to the number of years the respondent has worked at USNA. The mean number of years was 14.4. The median number of years was 11.5. The range of the number of years at USNA was two to 32 with a standard deviation of 10.59.

Table 6. Time at USNA

Time at USNA	2	3	6	7	9	14	23	23	25	32

All respondents reported being active in all three aspects of an academic career: a) teaching in the classroom, b) conducting professional research, and c) providing service to the department and institution through participation in the faculty senate or department committees. Although several respondents reported participating in midshipman focused service activities, such as honor's research approval committees or admissions, one participant explicitly stated:

> Outside of teaching in the core and upper level courses, the service that I do here is, primarily by choice, midshipman oriented. I've done plebe advising. I'm the faculty rep to the ____ team. I've been senior academic advisor. I do a lot of mentoring with the honors program. You know, as many midshipman contact service commitments as I can make. That's what I most prefer to do.

Similar to the professor quoted above, seven of ten interview subjects reported being actively involved as faculty representatives to Midshipman Extra-curricular Activities (clubs or NCAA sports teams).

In addition to their core instruction, five of ten professors reported working with midshipmen in independent research programs such as department honors studies or Trident Scholars.

One professor reported:

> Since I've been here I've had research students. So I've had a Trident scholar and I expect to have another Trident scholar next year, but then I'll

> also, in between those kind of years, I have researchers who are getting 3 credits to do research with me … in terms of research students, I've had 9 students.

Another stated:

> The honors program works very well. I've had -- I've been lucky enough to have had 3 honors students in a row and it's nice to go and, in a semi-academic format, to be able to go beyond the academic format.

2. Question 2 (Definition)

Given the operational definition that mentoring is a sustained, mutually reinforcing personal relationship between a mentor and a protégé characterized by the professional and personal development of the protégé, describe what mentoring means to you.

Table 7. Functional Area

Functional Area	Number of Respondents
Vocational/Career	3
Psychosocial	3
Role Modeling	1
Blend	3

All participants were asked this question. Responses generally correspond to one of the four categories identified from prior research (Burke, 1984; Kram, 1985; Noe, 1988; Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, Feren, 1988): a) vocational/career functions, b) psychosocial functions, c) role modeling, or d) an amalgam of two or more of the other three (listed as "Blend" in Table 7). The respondents were classified into one of the four categories as depicted in Table 7. Although no respondent was dogmatically committed to one category, the professors were subjectively classified based upon the preponderance of statements that aligned with one or more categories. Each category is addressed separately below.

a. Vocational/Career Function

While the majority of the "blend" respondents had a vocational/career aspect to their responses, the three respondents, all civilian, identified as having a vocational/career focus clearly saw the protégé's professional development as the main

function of a mentoring relationship and "then to monitor that person throughout his or her development here at the Academy or wherever."

However, one professor felt that the defining characteristic of a mentoring relationship was the mentor's role of preparing the protégé for a career in the same field as the professor as being the critical aspect of the mentoring relationship. This vocational/career respondent was so committed to this concept that he or she did not see the interaction with the midshipmen as mentoring. The respondent stated:

> I don't see it very much here at all in terms of faculty and midshipmen. I don't think the Naval Academy is set-up in a way -- particularly for those of us who teach _____ -- to have much of mentoring relationship … a normal _____ professor in terms of mentoring someone, would be looking at that person going on to graduate school in the discipline of _____ and becoming a teacher or a professor or a researcher or something in _____. And, that happens so rarely here … So, I mean, mentoring for me is not even a concept I've ever thought of in terms of midshipmen. Advising them. Counseling them. But mentoring them implies that you want them somehow to follow in your footsteps. So, I don't see it.

b. Psychosocial Function

The three professors, two civilian and one military, classified as focusing on the psychosocial function, gave responses that indicated that the emotional and psychological health of their students was very important. Although this group, as with all the others, was not blind to the needs to develop their protégés professionally or display positive role modeling, the emotional well-being of their students was most important. T

One respondent commented that, "it's really important to kind of reassure them so that they're not intimidated" so that "they'll be more inclined to be relaxed and be willing to question or challenge something I might say in the classroom. Or we could probably get off on a discussion about something."

Another respondent stated:

> I think it's much more important that they emotionally are ready … I've always felt like sort of an Eastern philosophy idea of, you know, having your house in order. And you can't do that, you can't worry about anything else if you're not emotionally ready for what you're going to do.

> And so I've always focused on personal issues and what it means as a person to be an officer.

The third member of this group explained:

> I guess informally it's for me, a give and take relationship. I think the thing that I've enjoyed most about mentoring is I learn as much sometimes as the person I'm helping through the process. So, it's a give and take relationship that just involves being able to pass on your experiences and your resourcefulness to someone who generally is younger or has not had the opportunities that you had.

c. Role Modeling Function

Only one respondent was classified as having a role model focus. The respondent was a civilian professor. While many respondents mentioned role modeling or that part of their responsibility was to "provide an example to the person being mentored," one professor reported role modeling, in all its aspects, as the key function, stating:

> Mentoring is this sort of professional parental relationship between the mentor and the protégé. Like a parenting relationship, sometimes the mentor has to provide direct instruction. But I do that, even in class, and I don't consider those mentoring relationships. In a parental relationship, you do a lot of your teaching through modeling. You know, 'What kind of person are you?' 'How do you handle different situations?' And we do that somewhat as an instructor, but when it's one instructor and 24 students, they don't know you very well as a complete person. A mentorship relationship is usually one on one and the protégé really gets to see how the mentor handles different situations.

d. Blend

The final category includes three professors, two military and one civilian. Both of the military instructors in this category equated mentoring to leadership wherein the mentor wants the protégé "to mature out of the box."

One military professor explained that he directed his protégés not to simply focus on their one technical skill but also to develop themselves in a number of general categories. Similarly, the other military professor in this group defined mentoring as, "going back to being a leader. Also being a friend. And also, maybe more an advisor to folks so they can come in and maybe just ask questions." In both cases, the

two military professors were concerned that the protégé developed with some balance among a number of areas.

The civilian professor placed in this group was classified as such because his focus was not defined to any single aspect but rather in "trying to provide them [his students] with the curiosity and interest and skills to do a lot of self-reflection."

3. Question 3 (Differentiation)

What do you think separates a good mentor from a good instructor?

All participants were asked this question. Respondents overwhelmingly (10/10) identified that the roles and functions between being a good instructor and being a good mentor were different. Respondents said the instructor role was fixed, formal, and impersonal. The mentoring role was viewed as dynamic, informal, and personal. One respondent stated:

> [The] differences are in the level of detail and the effort that you're working on. Good instructors have a tendency to take their students all the way through a process. So, a process is "canned" so to speak. You see the beginning. You see the middle. You see the end. You see the correct path to take.
>
> Whereas when you're mentoring something, someone, it's generally a new situation. It's a new possibility for everybody that is involved. It may be similar to something that you've been through but there is no, necessarily, right or wrong answer. So, you're doing more of a directing process as opposed to leading them all the way through.

Another professor described the difference as follows:

> Well you know, a good instructor has to know the information. Be able to convey it, stimulate interest in the subject itself.
>
> [Whereas] from my experience a good mentor has phenomenal people skills. It's the qualitative side, the right brain side of somebody. Doesn't have to be the smartest academic, the best researcher, or whatever. Just cares about people and -- out of a genuine concern. And if you don't have a genuine concern then I'm not sure in my mind that you can be a good mentor.

The concept of the mentor personally caring about the students was a second theme found in the responses to this question. For example:

> I can be a very effective teacher in the classroom just because I'm interested in the materials, they should get it. I'll present it. But I could care less whether they -- a personal relationship develops at all. But mentoring to me, I think that … there's got to be something very personal develop for me to be even interested in the relationship.

Another professor's comments further illustrates this idea of caring:

> It comes down to how much you generally care about the midshipmen. And, I mean all midshipmen, not just the ones you choose to mentor.

4. Question 4 (Characteristics)

What do you think are some of the characteristics of a good mentor?

Seven of the ten participants were asked this question directly. The remaining three provided characteristics within answers to other questions. This question is the first of three questions designed to identify which traits or personality aspects the professors felt were important. In response to this question, at least two professors stated that each of the following traits were important: having a caring attitude, availability, being accepting, and serving as a good role model. Individually, other professors listed resourcefulness, an active interest in the students, good listening skills, and a willingness to share knowledge. Professors provided clarifying information about their beliefs, such as, "we should try to help them and bring the best out of them, I guess, rather than being demanding." Another professor stated:

> I look at the mentors that I've had, the real good mentors have been what I call color-blind. They don't care, race, color of skin. You're a person. You're an individual. The dignity and respect that they extend to you. And that just makes the world of difference.

5. Question 5 (Experience)

Do you think that someone needs years of experience to be an exemplary mentor?

Table 8. Experience

EXPERIENCE REQUIRED?	
YES	4
NO	3
IT HELPS	3

All participants were asked this question. As depicted in Table 8 above, responses indicate a near even division. Those that felt experience was necessary explained that mentoring was:

> something that only comes with experience. I mean, I think that you need the experience. I don't see how you could really be a good mentor if you've only been an instructor or been here for a year or two.

Another professor expressed a similar idea in his concern for recently commissioned officers:

> I don't think anybody can just jump out and leave the Academy, put on the bars, and stand in front of their troops and now he's a mentor. You have to have a little mentoring yourself … so that, you in turn, can return the favor to those individuals who end up working for you and working with you.

Those that felt experience was not necessary explained that the quality of mentoring experience was more important than age or the number of mentoring experiences. The responses all expressed a viewpoint similar to the following:

> It's like teaching. You could have twenty years of teaching, but it could be twenty times one bad year and it's still bad. It's not just automatic experience, and you're not going to automatically get a lot better.

Another professor believed that mentoring was "more of a question of attitude than it is necessarily accumulated experience."

Those that felt experience helps, but that effective mentoring was not dependent upon experience, gave answers similar to the following:

> If you're more cognizant of the role you play, it will make you a better mentor because you realize the significance of what you're doing.

Another professor in this category was able to highlight both advantages and disadvantages to experience. In this case, the professor appeared to equate experience with age.

> The disadvantage is that years of experience means that you're probably farther removed from the protégé and it's harder to remember what it's like to be the student and there's just a bigger gap. The good thing about having years of experience is that you have years of experience to draw on. You're probably more confident. You can handle more, new situations. There are probably fewer new situations. You've probably made more mistakes and worked through things, so you can model behavior and show how you'd get through things better with that experience.

6. Question 6 (Change)

In a mentoring context, how do you think you're different now from when you started your career?

Nine of the ten respondents were asked this question. Only two respondents answered that they felt they had not changed at all. Of those two, one reported:

> I think that the big difference for me is that I understand the institution a lot better. I understand the military a lot better. I understand their future careers a lot better. So, I think that I can be a better mentor in that way because I know a lot more about Bancroft [Hall] and a lot more about the fleet. A lot more about the Marine Corps than I used to.

Seven of the respondents reported an overall increase in the number of mentoring relationships they were involved in. Additionally, the faculty who recognized their behavior had changed reported being less reactive, being more directive, having more confidence, and having increased their interpersonal skills.

All three military respondents gave answers indicating they had benefited from their own mentoring experiences as protégés and had increased their own mentoring skills. One professor provided the following descriptive analogy:

> I think when I was an Ensign, I was a sponge. I'm still a sponge, but I was a dry sponge. Now I'm a wet sponge. How's that? So, I'm willing to

> share and wipe things down and you squeeze me and stuff comes out. When I was an Ensign, I was dry and everything was being sucked in, right? I had to learn. I had to train. I had to absorb, and I'm still doing that. But like a sponge, if I get squeezed now, you're probably going to get something out of it. You know, I can adapt. I can contribute. I can do things, where I couldn't do those same things when I was an Ensign.

7. Question 7 (Choice)

Let us say you have two professors here on the yard who are equally experienced. Why is one sought out by midshipmen as a mentor and one is not?

Nine of the ten respondents were asked this question. This question is the second of three questions designed to identify traits or personality aspects that the professors felt were important. Six of the ten respondents either expressly stated "approachability" or described it as being the single most important trait for a professor. For example:

> My feeling is, as a matter of fact, students will actually seek out those instructors they feel that they can talk to. And that's shown by their personality in class. I think that if you show the midshipmen that you're really willing to help and you are really sincere in that idea, they will come and they will afford themselves of that help.

Three professors also discussed the role of professional expertise. One stated that student selection had, "something has to do with subject matter." Another professor stated:

> I think sometimes they [professors] are sought out for different reasons. I think midshipmen have a tendency to look at the academic side of the house, many times, in kind of little boxes. … They have an inclination to think just because you're a professor in a certain area then you are the expert in that area and that's what you live and breathe and eat and sleep and that's all you know about. You don't know about anything else. So, if they have a problem in that area, they'll come to you about that.
>
> I think it's only after they've gotten to know you a little bit that they may see other aspects to you and may seek you out if you indicate that you're available to talk to them about things or that you're amenable to talking to them about things.
>
> But I think, probably, that you're sought out if you have an area of expertise that they need if they have to solve an academic problem or

> you're sought out if they have some other issues that you're willing to help them solve or at least listen to them and care about it.

Although several professors relayed information that described how they let the midshipmen know they were available and approachable, one professor gave a particularly interesting example:

> I've actually intentionally made a switch in my research to make it something that they can grasp and find exciting. So, I used to really do _____ research and I still do, but I don't involve students with that. I involve them with [described research project]. That's something that I did because I wanted to attract students -- make myself more approachable. Make my research more approachable. So, I think that those things do it.

Further reflecting the importance the respondents placed on "approachability," several professors stated that they thought that not all of their peers expressed the same level of care and concern for the midshipmen as the exemplary mentors. For example:

> I think some profs [sic] just put up fences right away. They want to have only the academic relationship between student and instructor and they don't want to go beyond that.

One professor commented on the potential threat of disciplinary action that inhibits the midshipmen from seeking out certain members of the Academy staff and faculty. For example:

> Given the two mentors, if one of them is a company officer and one of them is not, I think that most times they would chose to go to <u>not</u> the company officer, only because there is such an "us versus them" attitude among the midshipmen and company officers. Like when you're in the Commandant's [of Midshipmen] chain of command, you're a potential threat. You're like on the radar as, "This guy could fry me." You know, they don't look at that, which could be the most fulfilling mentor-mentee relationship, because of the proximity the Company Officers' have with them. You would think that would facilitate mentoring, but I think because there is such a negative stigmatism [sic] associated with Company Officers being like the enemy.

Responses to this question highlighted an interesting contrast between civilian and faculty professors. Two of the three military professors were concerned that midshipmen

would seek out faculty mentors who were easy graders rather than being drawn to faculty members who held the midshipmen to a standard. For example:

> What does a midshipmen justify by going to one instructor over another? Is it because he likes -- is the guy -- does the instructor have an approach where he's trying to be friendly? Is he a good effective leader? Is he teaching well?

> Sometimes the junior midshipman, the 17, 18, 19 year old, doesn't have the same concepts we do. So when they favor one instructor over another, I can't -- I have to look at the values of what is the instructor's approach to teaching. Is he trying to be a friend or is he teaching something? Sometimes when you teach the stuff that you have to teach and you get it out there across and you're providing the instruction the way it's supposed to be and you don't take any prisoners … You're providing the level of instruction there is supposed to be

8. Question 8 (Stress)

When you do have a mentoring relationship, do you ever find that stressful? If so, how do you deal with that?

Nine of the ten respondents were asked this question. Three professors reported that they did find the relationships stressful at times. Six professors reported they did not find the relationships stressful.

One professor, representing the stressed group, commented:

> I think that it becomes difficult or stressful when you can't come to terms with someone that you're mentoring choosing a different path than you suggest. Or maybe making the same mistakes over and over again and you're having difficulty with that.

Another professor stated:

> It's always difficult and stressful. If it is an easy relationship, I don't even need a mentor … Where you really need mentoring, to me as an individual, is stressful. Highly stressful. But, that's the name of the game. Because if you don't go through this -- if I didn't feel that stress, then I wouldn't care about the person and, you know, but if you really care about a person and they're not doing well, to me, it's not an easy relationship. It's a stressful one and that's -- So if there's no stress, either the person is really doing well or I'm not even doing a good job of mentoring.

The third affirmative response cited:

> What I tend to do is, I think that the student is more capable than he or she really is. So, part of my style is as soon as possible, I start to, you know, expect them to act independently. To do things independently. And, when they let me down, that's what will cause me stress. (Emphasis added).

In each of these cases, the mentor appears to have taken the protégés actions personally. Those that responded that they did not feel the relationships were stressful were not inconsiderate of the midshipmen's feelings, however, they appeared to feel that the protégés actions were not a personal reflection on them.

The negative respondents provided comments such as:

> I wouldn't characterize it as difficult or stressful. I mean, there have been times when I've really pondered what was going to happen. How can I best help somebody? Or what can I do? But I don't look at that as terribly stressful. I look at that as just a part of the difficulties that we have to overcome in life.

Another professor commented:

> In a sense, it isn't my problem, so I can be sympathetic or empathetic, you know. So, it's not stressful for me.

Those reporting that their relationships had been stressful appeared to compound that stress by continuing to think the professor was responsible for solving the problem whereas those who reported that they did not feel stressed took a more distanced approach.

9. Question 9 (Exemplary)

What do you think is particularly "exemplary" about you? Is there something that distinguishes you?

Nine of the ten respondents were asked this question. All nine respondents had difficulty answering this question and did so with humility. Responses were common to the following:

> I don't think there is anything, you know, really I don't …other than maybe I do think I'm more approachable than some other faculty members, if I can say that.

Another professor reported:

> I don't look at myself as being particularly exemplary. If anything, I guess I work really hard at what I do. My jobs, as I listed before, the things I do, I put a lot of effort into doing those things. And I try to be the best at whatever I'm doing. I'm very competitive. So maybe there's something in that competitive nature that midshipmen are attracted to or make me somewhat exemplary, I don't know.

After some consideration, all participants were able to provide a response. Some professors reported specific aspects:

> Well, I think I am probably very approachable … The students say that they feel very comfortable asking me questions.

Still another described the reason for their selection as:

> I'm a detail kind of person. I keep that running list and I make sure things get done. So if there is an issue with someone, that goes on my list. So, if there is something that someone has come to me and needs help with, I usually try not to let it slide and try to take care of it for them.

Four respondents focused on the concern and interest in protégé development as the reason for their selection, a sentiment echoed in the comment below:

> I don't know what the people would say but I would hope that it would be that I really care about their success.

10. Question 10 (Distinguish)

Is there one distinguishing aspect of your mentoring expertise?

As stated above, by the fourth interview, responses to Question 10 were so redundant to responses to Question 9 that Question 10 thereafter was not asked.

11. Question 11 (Mentored)

Were you mentored? This can be at any time. If so, by whom?

Eight of ten respondents were asked this question. All ten respondents gave examples of their own mentoring experience either in response to this question or in

response to another question during the interview. Table 9 below depicts the parity between the categorization of the respondent's classification and the classification of their mentor. In cases nine and ten, the respondents reported they were not mentored.

Table 9. Parity between Respondents Category and their Mentors

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Professor	P	V	P	P	R	V	B	B	B	V
Professor's Mentor	P	V	V	P	R	V	V	V	N	N

Key: V = Vocational/Career Function Focus
P = Psychosocial Function Focus
R = Role Model Function Focus
B = Blend of two or more functions
N = Not mentored

Fifty percent of the respondents recalled personal mentoring experiences (as a protégé) that paralleled their stated professor's beliefs and attitudes toward mentoring. Five of the respondents cited their graduate thesis advisor as their mentor. In two of those five cases, the professor was still in contact with their mentor. The other three respondents cited an athletic coach, senior colleague, or some other adult influence as their mentor.

One respondent exemplified this later group in his description of his mentors, a description that also highlighted mentoring behaviors, stating:

> I've always thought that the mentor relationship is one that you always kind of sustain throughout your professional life. And there's two people who actually come to mind who have definitely acted as mentors for me in my career. One of them was my sponsor when I was here [at USNA] … and we just sort of clicked when we first met.
>
> He's always been somebody who, whenever I've had trouble or questions about career things, he's always been somebody I could go to for a good perspective … he's always tried to give me sound advice and he definitely has been a mentor for me.
>
> And then also my first boss when I was an ensign, he and I have stayed in pretty close contact and he's always been somebody else who, if I have specific Navy career questions, I know I can go to. And we've crossed paths three or four times.

> They both really care about me and how I do. They're both proud of my successes and they both feel for me when I have failures. And I know that no matter what I do, they are people who will accept me.

Another professor described the personal and professional influence his or her mentor had had:

> I would say I was mentored by my thesis advisor. This is my PhD thesis advisor. He did exactly what it is that I try to do. He was a role model. I saw how he would think. How he would solve problems. And you know, I'm talking about research problems but as well as other things that would come up. He is an excellent researcher. He is an excellent teacher. He won an award … for teaching, which is very unusual because usually good researchers at a big school are not good teachers. But he was both … I worked with him for 5 years to get my PhD. And in that time, he was also personable … We went through some interesting experiences together, all besides the research.
>
> I now model how I teach, how I do research after him. I can -- and you know, some of this is not intentional. It's accidental. It's who I've become. He's really molded who I am.

12. Question 12 (Success)

How do you know when you're doing a good job with a student? Academically, I assume is obvious by their test scores and things like that, but also how do you know when your making an impact upon them personally and professionally, and I mean their development as an individual and a future naval officer?

Eight of ten respondents were asked this question. All eight easily gave examples of how they know students were doing well academically. However, six professors had some difficulty articulating a response to the second half of the question. After deliberation, common answers were:

> I think the true test is when they keep in touch with you after they're gone and when you hear about their success after they're gone. And that's not many of them -- it's certainly not all the ones that you've instructed -- But actually, a lot of the times it's a very simple look in the eye and it's a very simple thank you from them that you kind of know, for like, for maybe some of the short term things where you are maybe helping them over a hurdle or something.

Another professor explained:

> Well, when you're doing a good job, I think sometimes it's like teaching a class. Sometimes you don't know what you did but you knew it was a good thing when you did it and you have a good feeling when you walk out of the room.

13. Question 13 (Selection)

How do you select protégés? How do you choose to whom you are going to give that extra attention and time?

Eight of ten respondents were asked this question. All ten respondents discussed protégé selection either in response to this question or elsewhere in the interview.

Table 10. Selection

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Seek me	X		X	X	X	X			X	X
Seek them							X			
Mutual		X						X		

As depicted in Table 10 above, seven professors stated that they make themselves available and allow the midshipmen to come to them. All seven also reported they explicitly addressed availability in either their class syllabus or during the first class period.

The two professors who cited mutual selection stated:

> It's not something that I go into a class and say I'm looking for somebody, one or two people, a number comes to mind. I just go in. And all of a sudden … just, something clicks. And a lot of it is usually, there's a problem from the mids point of view. You listen to it. And you become concerned. Not because it's on your job, supposed to do, or to look good. Just because you become concerned with this person and a relationship builds and builds and builds and you know, it's ten years later you're hearing from them from the fleet.

The other mutual selection professor stated:

> Some is by choice, choice either way. If I sense someone is having a problem in my class, we'll have a talk …I don't know where the counseling is going to go, but I do know I get them up here.

Only one of the professors responded to explicitly seeking out protégés, explaining:

> I watch the students that come in and some of them, that I look out for, probably are the ones that are going to be, if no one interacts with them at the senior level, they will be the type that [focus on the academic skill]. They will not have the social skills. They will not know how to focus on anything else but technology and they will lose the focus of being able to talk to people. And, when it comes time for somebody to ask them a question out in the fleet, they're not going to know how to react.

14. Question 14 (Recipe)

If you could make the ideal exemplary mentor, you know, a dash of this, a jig of that, what ingredients would you include?

Nine of ten respondents were asked this question. This is the third question designed to identify traits or personality aspects that the professors felt were important. Responses are grouped as to how they reflect one of the four following categories: a) Vocational/Career, b) psychosocial, c) role modeling, d) other. Table 11 below summarizes the nine professors responses. Of note is the limited number of responses that addressed role modeling directly. Only one of the ten interviewed professors viewed role modeling as a primary function of mentoring. The remaining nine professors responses focused on either vocational functions, psychosocial support functions or a balance of those two categories.

Table 11. Ideal traits by category

Vocational/Career		
	… a good working knowledge of that field … … knowledge of the resources that are available to people who are coming up through that career and through that area … … a very clearly defined, mutually agreed upon set of objectives that should be attained for successful career progression …	… help the students to become independent … … provide … practical suggestions … … experience ... … successful in whatever they do …
Psychosocial		
	… willingness to get involved … good sense of humor … … helpful relationship … …real personal relationship with that person that goes far beyond the career progression … open … … understanding … … friendly …	… empathy to understand … … approachable … … interested in the development of that person … … an active interest … … caring … … a listener ... … patience … … not formal …
Role modeling		
	… show your human side …	
Other		
	… dynamic … not one dimensional … … mentor himself would have to have been mentored …	

15. Question 15 (Gender)

Only two of ten respondents were asked this question. As the literature review indicated some level of debate exists over the role of gender in mentoring and given that white males make-up the preponderance of both the faculty and student body at USNA,

the researcher asked two of the three female respondents specific questions as to their perceptions of their gender role in a mentoring context. Both respondents were asked:

Because, you're kind of a minority group here at the Naval Academy, do you find that more female midshipmen approach you, or is it just kind of random?

Neither of the two professors' asked believed that gender was a factor. One female professor responded:

> it doesn't seem to be a gender issue with the mids. The mids look for who can help them … I think it's a good thing … I think mids know that when they need help they just go to the best source to get help.

The other professor asked, said:

> In terms of research students, I've had nine students and only two have been women. But, in _____, there's not very many women to begin with, so, that might not be entirely fair.

When probed further if they had been approached for personal advice based on gender, the professor responded:

> No. The only place has been maybe that one student I told you about whose mother had cancer. I think she might have felt more comfortable with my asking than if it had been somebody else. I think that might be true. I haven't had female midshipmen come up to tell me anything. You know, I've kind of been aware that maybe I would play a special role in their lives. Maybe if they're having personal problems, that they would feel like they could talk to me and it's never happened. They've never said, "Hey, can I talk to you for a couple of minutes about something that's going on." So, no.

D. FORMAL/INFORMAL EXPERIENCES

During the conduct of the interviews, interview respondents gave responses to all questions asked, but did not always "answer" the question. In this and the following section, responses are given regardless of where in the interview timeline they occurred.

1. Formal

Although the respondents' were not specifically asked for opinions and experiences regarding "formal" mentoring programs, eight of the ten respondents provided responses to this topic.

Five of those eight professors, 1 military and 4 civilian, provided input that focused on the negative aspects of formal mentoring programs. Two of the five specifically addressed their dissatisfaction with the formal mentoring provided through the Honor Remediation program.

a. The Challenges of Formal Mentoring Systems

The requirements and processes of formal, remedial, or required mentoring programs are by default different than those of informal mentoring relationships. The following section will highlight comments by interviewed faculty members regarding their experiences with formal mentoring programs. Overall, the faculty appeared willing to participate in formal programs, but recognized the difference between the informal and formal programs. Furthermore, with only one exception, the faculty did not endorse formal mentoring programs.

One civilian faculty member recounted a singular experience with the Honor Remediation Program following a cheating incident at USNA that involved a number of midshipmen:

> I recall that because they had a perceived crisis on their hands and needed to do something fairly quickly and immediately about it and they came up with this program of Honor Remediation …. and this was something that all of a sudden they got the entire Yard involved, or at least, they asked for volunteers. So, I volunteered and had two midshipmen appointed to me, since I didn't necessarily know any of these midshipmen who were involved … in some way, but it was not made explicit exactly how they were involved …
>
> So, I thought it was good to include a whole variety of people. And I thought it was also good to leave it a little unstructured to allow individuals to pursue it like they would want … And so, I pretty much just engaged them in one-to-one conversations about, what did they think about honor. "What's the meaning of honor?" Without trying to give any type of, "I want to come to this answer at the end." I just want them to think about what it is and ultimately what I really wanted them to come up with was to realize that it all lies within themselves and it's an attitude. Like everything else, it's an attitude that they have the power to create.
>
> The thing that made it a little difficult is the fact that it was midshipmen who I didn't know and who -- one was seemingly pretty ashamed and

wanted this off her record as quickly as possible and would do whatever it took.

And, the other was resistant. Felt that this was unfair. A sham. Some people got caught. Other people didn't get caught and so there was this resistance that I had to encounter to try to say, "Alright, well, let's say it is unfair. But we have to meet for so many" -- that was one of the requirements -- we had to meet for so many times over so many hours. "So, we have to do this. Either we can make it a painful situation or we can make it something worthwhile. And that choice is yours." So, eventually, I maybe nicked away a little bit at his resistance.

A military professor also recounted an experience as an assigned mentor in the honor remediation program:

I had an honor remediator guy -- different kind of mentoring -- who also, uniquely, ended up being in my Ethics class. O.K.? And over time, you know, we're talking about his issues of honor and not to lie. His was a lying issue. And then, but I started sensing his standards were not -- So was this guy gaming me? He'd always sit in that chair and we'd have chats each week and he always knew the right answers …

[H]e knows why he's here and knows what he better answer to and he better -- he does the readings and all that stuff. But I started noticing him in class, that he wore a necklace and not shaved and all that stuff and I'm saying, hey --

So he came in one day, and I said, "Now let me share something with you. I'm supposed to evaluate you for the Commandant. And I'm evaluating the whole mid, not just this honor thing. You know why you're in trouble. We talked about it's just not good to lie and we read books and we discussed it, but my issue is, how do I know you're not gaming me? Because, you're on a probation system. Here's this guy who's going to make a recommendation that you see every other day, every week plus we meet separately for this honor remediation. And you start coming to class unprepared. You're not wearing the uniform that I expect you to wear. You know I'm a stickler for that." …

So I said, you know, "I just want you to go away and I want you to reflect on the bigger picture here. Because you might tell me, 'Oh, yeah, sir, I know shouldn't lie and I shouldn't --' all this stuff, but I'm more worried about you as a midshipman because you're on probation and yet you don't think some of these rules apply to you. So maybe this honor thing doesn't really apply to you and you're just giving me the answers to get through the program? So next week, I want to hear more about you and why I

> have to tell you that you didn't shave today and is that necklace really appropriate for that uniform...and why should I be telling you that? Especially since you know I'm mentoring you on the side."

On a more general level, two faculty members also talked about the difficulty in establishing formal mentoring programs at USNA due to the culture. They explained:

> [There was] no, culture in the department to have a formal mentoring program. And when you're dealing with civilian faculty, it's real hard to get them to change their way of doing things.

Another professor mentioned the difficulty in getting the other faculty members to support a formal program:

> I did try to set up a mentoring program for faculty members -- new faculty members coming in and also, with officers, even though officers may have had more experience than some of the new junior faculty who are civilians. But sometimes I think, you know, the environment is, in a college setting, is kind of different.

A third professor explained his or her feelings after being the recipient of a formalized mentoring program attempt:

> We had a new dean here a number of years ago and it was right when I was getting an administrative position and he told me one day that he was going to be my mentor. And I found that offensive. Because, I don't think it is a one-way street. A mentoring relationship develops over time. I certainly don't think it happens in one meeting and I think that it is an understanding on both parts that the mentoree wants to be mentored … And for somebody to say he's going to be your mentor when perhaps you don't even admire the person or want to be like that person and he's kind of in a superior position then it becomes a very oppressive relationship.

One professor provided a summary of formal mentoring relationships with other faculty members. While this does not directly reflect the relationship with the midshipmen, it does reflect this professor's beliefs and behaviors regarding formal mentoring programs. Although the professor focused on what he or she perceived as mentoring failures, the professor provided suggestions for elements to include in a successful formal mentoring program, to wit:

> Well, definitely lots of room for improvement on the assigned mentoring … first of all, there was no formal system of accountability. And I really think if you're going to have formal mentoring program, the mentor has to be accountable. There has to be objectives laid out that you're going to try to achieve and then periodic review of how well, from the mentor's point of view, the mentees point of view, how well is the relationship going …
>
> And finally, if you can just basically think of -- to be really successful, is what, I think, in my mind, for me, I have to get -- develop a real personal relationship with that person that goes far beyond the career progression. That you care about them as an individual.

b. Success Characteristics of Formal Mentoring Programs

As a counter-point, one professor related a very positive experience with formalized mentoring and expressed an interest in reconstituting the program. In response to a question as to how the professor believed he or she had changed in a mentoring context, the professor explained:

> They had done that a couple of years ago [assigned faculty protégés to senior faculty members]. They assigned -- I was actually assigned to one person to mentor. Now that seems like a great idea to me and I don't know why it's fallen by the wayside now … I felt that not only did the person that I mentored [receive] help but he helped me too because we exchanged ideas …
>
> The person who I mentored is still here … but he came along and now he's … an Associate Professor -- but he's doing very well. And he's a -- I think, he's a valued colleague of mine … and he and I are very good friends now.

Another professor recounted a story of an incident that grew out of an instructor-student relationship:

> I can give you one example. That duck up there that is on my top shelf was given to me by a mid about ten years ago now … The mid did a term paper and I thought, gee, this isn't this guy. I mean, he had footnoted this one source. I happened to have this book that he had cited on my shelf and I pulled it off and there clearly, it was plagiarized.
>
> So, I called him in, and I said, "Well, you know, this is plagiarism," … He was really surprised and he said, "Well, I cited the book." I said, "Yes, but you cite it here and here but in between you've got paragraphs that are almost verbatim. You can't do that." I think he really was surprised

> because he thought that, "Why I gave credit -- " "Well, that's not sufficient." Well at any rate, so I told him, I said, "Well, look, I'm not going to turn this over to the Honor committee, but I expect you to do another paper or do this one over."
>
> Well, so he did it over and the semester was over and he got a grade and I don't know. Because I really thought that he had, at least was partly in error -- I think maybe he knew he was cutting some corners, but I don't really know -- anyway, I gave him a grade and I think he got a C or maybe a D for the course.
>
> Anyway, when he came back, he'd already gotten his grade and everything else, but he'd brought me that duck. He came from a family that didn't have much money and he said they often bought those ducks and painted them and give them to each other as gifts and so he just wanted to thank me. And so I said, "Well, you know, when you get your commission and you're an officer sometime you're going to have people that are going to screw up and you know, you have to -- if there's a lesson in this, maybe it's that you be merciful to somebody. I mean, just because you've got them in your power, that you can …" … and I was very pleased. I felt we both got something out of it. I've taken that as a great symbol and I've kept that.

c. Success Characteristics of a Facilitated Mentoring Environment

Four professors gave examples that displayed how opportunities for mentoring relationships are provided through various academic settings. One professor explained:

> We have formal ways and informal way of doing that in our department. So, as far as the midshipmen are concerned, if they show an interest in certain areas then we have an avenue. We actually have research tasks that they can become involved in … Trident scholar is one. We have independent research.

Echoing the sentiment, another professor said:

> The honors program works very well. I've had -- I've been lucky enough to have had 3 honors students in a row and it's nice to go and in a semi-academic format to be able to go beyond the academic format.

On a less formal basis, one professor retold an event that occurred because of academic remedial instruction:

> I had a student who was not a research student. She was in my core _____ [class]. And, she would come for EI [extra instruction] because she was really struggling. And something was wrong. And I asked her. And it turned out, that her parents were separated. And that wasn't actually the problem, but that her mother had cancer and was alone.
>
> And so, this poor midshipman was worried about that … I told her, you know, "There's help here. There's more you can do." I called up counseling while she was here. Talked to the person. Handed the phone over and she started going. And when I see her, you know, she's always really happy to see me. I check in on her when I can.
>
> And the reason I would even say it is sort of mentoring, while it wasn't the same kind of relationship I've built with research students, again, I think I modeled good behavior in that I know that if I needed personal help, I know that there is always somebody there.

2. Informal

The eight professors that made a distinction between formal and informal mentoring displayed a variety of beliefs concerning their informal mentoring role. Three professors did not see their informal interactions with the midshipmen as mentoring. One of those three even stated: "I don't necessarily consider myself a mentor." Another two professors recognized that they were involved in an informal helping relationship, but did not consider that mentoring. One stated:

> Informally it's for me, a give and take relationship … I've had some come with personal problems or issues. It's not really mentoring per se, but I'll help them.

Another explained:

> Mentoring for me is not even a concept I've ever though of in terms of midshipmen. Advising them. Counseling them … I help them get their academic schedule. I talk to them about their problems. But that to me is not a mentoring relationship at all.

During the interviews, the concept of mentor-protégé pairing was explored. Two professors explicitly stated that informal mentoring was normally the result of mutual selection. Another seven respondents indicated that they allowed themselves to be

selected after making it clear that they were approachable, available, and willing to help. As one professor stated:

> It's just a relationship that develops out of teaching class a lot of the time … Informal mentoring has been engendered by, just a personal relationship that comes out of teaching students. I have 20 in a class. One or two -- there's just -- something clicks.

Another professor explained his or her concept of mentor-protégé selection as follows:

> I don't think it is a one-way street. A mentoring relationship develops over time. I certainly don't think it happens in one meeting and I think that it is an understanding on both parts that the mentoree wants to be mentored … I think it's something that happens spontaneously over the course of a relationship.

Only one professor admitted to explicitly seeking out midshipmen for professional counseling in a mentoring role. Three other professors did state that they would approach a student whose in-class behavior had changed and inquire if the student was having any difficulties, using that opportunity to re-iterate their availability and willingness to help. One of those three professors relayed the following story:

> Some [selection] is by choice, choice either way. If I sense someone is having a problem in my class, we'll have a talk. One, I want to know what's going on. "Why aren't you doing the work?" … And if … you're not doing your homework and all these patterns that are in this pink book, something is going on here. And maybe I don't understand it. Maybe there's an ill parent. Maybe, you just … want to leave here an honorable way. I want you to tell me. If you're planning on failing out on purpose, I just want you to tell me. And then we have a talk … I don't know where the counseling is going to go, but I do know I get them up here.

E. RESEARCH QUESTIONS: A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

At the outset of this study, the researcher asked two general questions: a) how do exceptional mentors conceptualize the mentoring task and mentoring relationships? and b) what do excellent mentors actually do in relation to protégés? The following section is divided into two parts. The first part summarizes the faculty's "concept" of mentoring.

The second part summarizes the findings that address the faculty's "actions" regarding mentoring.

1. Concept

In response to the first half of the research question, *how do exceptional mentors conceptualize the mentoring task and mentoring relationships?*, the results indicate the following common concepts. The interview results indicate that whether the faculty perceive themselves as mentors or not, all ten interview subjects engaged in behaviors consistent with mentoring theory. All ten participants fulfilled at least one major function of mentoring. Although there was no apparent difference between the beliefs and behaviors of civilian and military instructors, the military were more likely to perceive themselves, and be perceived by the civilian faculty, as mentors. Two of the seven civilian professors explicitly stated that they did not feel they were as influential or where as capable as serving as mentors as their military counterparts. One stated:

> I would think that … the people who feel much more like mentors here are people who are teaching who also wear a uniform and so they can feel that they are encouraging -- I can't mentor someone to be a Marine.

However, analysis of the interview results did not reveal any consistent difference between remarks and comments of the two groups.

The faculty reported that a personal interest in the midshipmen's welfare and success as the foremost distinguishing characteristic between a good instructor and a good mentor. The definition of "success" varied by professor but centered on academic success. However, four faculty members explicitly commented on the need to ensure the student's developed in a number of areas (i.e. moral, physical, mental, emotional, etc.). "Approachability" was the most commonly cited trait a good mentor needed to posses.

The group was widely divided over the role of age and experience in mentoring. Forty percent of the interviewed group felt that experience was essential. However, in each case, this group equated age with experience. Thirty percent of the professors did not think that experience was necessary. This group argued either explicitly or implicitly that mentoring was a desire and ability that an individual either had or did not have. Similarly, the remaining thirty percent did not think that experience was crucial, but that

experience was an added benefit, often equating mentoring to leadership. This group argued that if the mentor had certain abilities, traits, and characteristics, that individual would be a good mentor. With experience, that mentor would grow, improve, and refine his or her mentoring abilities.

Sixty percent of the professors reported they did not find mentoring stressful. Thirty percent of the professors reported they found the mentoring relationships very stressful at times. Those reporting that their relationships had been stressful appeared to compound that stress by continuing to think the professor (meaning themselves) was responsible for solving the problem whereas those who reported that they did not feel stressed took a more distanced approach. In each of these cases, the mentor appears to have taken the protégés actions personally. By contrast those that responded that they did not feel the relationships were stressful were not inconsiderate of the midshipmen's feelings, however, they appeared to feel that the protégé's actions were not a personal reflection on them.

Eighty percent of the group had experienced mentoring relationships as a protégé. The two female professors asked about the role of gender in mentoring at USNA reported that gender was not an issue in forming mentoring relationships.

Ninety percent of the professors preferred informal mentor-protégé formation to a formalized assignment program. However, three professors cited the importance of mentoring and the fact that they had received no education or training specifically in the subject. One stated,

> One of the things is I think, I knew we were going to have this talk and I've never talked to anybody about mentoring. It probably would be helpful for me … It probably would be fun for me to sit around a table with others and just see what their experiences were. You know, it's something for instance, that we need so much more of here in this department, in this institution.

2. Action

In response to the second half of the research question, *what do excellent mentors actually do in relation to protégés?,* the results indicate the following common concepts.

The specific actions the mentor performed in relation to their protégé largely depended upon the mentor's concept of mentoring. Those professors who focused on the vocational/career function stressed skills in that area. Those professors who focused on the psychosocial function engaged largely in emotional support activity, acceptance, and stress reduction. However, whatever the professor's focus, all members of the interviewed group stated the importance of being actively involved in the midshipmen's development. The majority of the interviewed group was active both within and outside of the classroom. Within the classroom, seventy percent reported they made themselves both approachable and available to the midshipmen for mentoring, but allowed the midshipmen to conduct the selection. Seventy percent of the exemplary mentors were involved with midshipmen outside of the classroom either as faculty representatives to clubs or sports team or as advisors to midshipmen independent research. Four professors recounted stories wherein a midshipman ostensibly seeking extra academic instruction (remediation or tutoring) would bring up a personal or professional problem to the faculty member during an academic session.

F. SUMMARY

This chapter reported the analyzed results of the interviews grouping responses first by question and then by theme. In the next chapter, the researcher will compare the findings of this study with established literature, developmental theory, and previous mentoring research conducted at USNA.

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V. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. OVERVIEW

At the outset of this study, the researcher asked two general questions: a) how do exceptional mentors conceptualize the mentoring task and mentoring relationships? and b) what do excellent mentors actually do in relation to protégés? The researcher conducted ten semi-structured interviews with peer nominated exemplary mentors from among the military and civilian faculty of USNA in order to identify and catalogue the most descriptive beliefs and behaviors held by this highly regarded group of mentors.

B. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS IN LIGHT OF EXISTING RESEARCH

1. Analysis of Common Traits

Analysis of interview responses indicates a high degree of agreement between the interview subject's responses and previous research. Table 12 below depicts the concurrence between Jacobi's (1991) summary of the foundational elements common to effective mentoring relationships and interview responses. In the table below, the left most column contains one of the five elements of Jacobi's (1991) summary definition of mentoring. The center column contains components or sub-elements of one of the five primary elements, if necessary. The right most column contains quotations from the interviewed faculty that reflect the meaning of Jacobi's definition.

The first foundational element, mentoring relationships as helping relationships, overwhelmingly echoed in the responses of the interview subjects. Not one of the three components (vocational/psychosocial/role model) stood out as dominant, although every professor mentioned emotional support at least once. The examples of interview responses are to illustrate that Jacobi's summary definition was consistent with the findings of this study at USNA.

Table 12. Definition Concurrence

Foundational Elements (Jacobi, 1991)	**Interview Responses (Examples)**
1) Mentoring relationships are helping relationships usually focused on achievement	I mean I think that's what it's all about, right? You want to help. You want get somebody on the right path … We're all supposed to try to help each other and help the students through …
2) Mentors provide any or all of the following three broad components:	
2a) Direct career assistance and professional development	part of the role of a mentor is to help the student make professional connections …
2b) Emotional and psychological support	I think we would be far better to the extent that we can get away from the judgmental factor …
2c) Role modeling.	the idea that this person in his or herself does provide what I would think would be a good example for a young person …
3) Mentoring relationships benefit both parties reciprocally	it's a give and take relationship … I felt that not only did the person that I mentored help but he helped me too because we exchanged ideas …
4) Mentoring relationships are personal.	We have a tendency to get personally involved with all [research students] …
5) Relative to their protégés, mentors show greater experience, influence and achievement within a particular organization or environment.	Degree 80% PhD 10% MS 10% BS Years at USNA: mean = 14.4 median = 11.5 SD = 10.59 range = 2 - 32

The interview results indicate that whether the faculty perceive themselves as mentors or not, all ten interview subjects engaged in behaviors consistent with mentoring theory. All ten participants fulfilled at least one major foundational element of mentoring

as described by other researchers (Burke, 1984; Jacobi, 1991; Kram,1985; Olian et al., 1988) and as defined within this study.

The faculty reported that a personal interest in the midshipmen's welfare and success was the foremost separator between a good instructor and a good mentor. This belief is consistent with the literature on mentoring (Jacobi, 1991; Kram,1985; Olian et al., 1988) and is one of the key factors in what separates a "mentor" from an "advisor."

The group was widely divided over the role and importance of age and experience in mentoring. Again, this finding is consistent with other research (Kram, 1985; Phillips-Jones, 1982; Zey 1984). However, as indicated in other research (Phillips-Jones, 1982), the mentor's ability to fulfill the mentoring roles and functions was the critical factor. Forty percent of the faculty equated experience to age, whereas the remaining 60% were more concerned with the specific experience(s) as apposed to the chronological age.

Ninety percent of the professors preferred informal mentor-protégé formation to a formalized assignment program. Consistent with previous findings (Merriam, 1983; Noe, 1988), the formalized programs at USNA focus on completing a specific assignment or developing a specific skill. For example, at USNA, the Honor Remediation Program is one such program that focuses on the development of a specific skill set; however, student or academic research advisors that limit the relationship to technical advice would be another example. Of note, however is that three professors recounted instances where true mentoring relationships developed out of formalized mentoring relationships. It should be noted that in two of those three experiences, the protégé was required to select a mentor/advisor but was allowed to make the final individual selection.

The two female professors questioned about the role of gender in mentoring at USNA reported that gender was not an issue in mentor-protégé formation. Although researchers continue to debate the role of gender in mentoring, the current study was consistent with the findings of Olian et al. (1988) in that gender preference was not a factor.

Although a few researchers, such as Phillips-Jones (1982), have suggested that mentoring can occur in a single encounter, the vast majority of researchers posit that the relationship is extended over time, ranging from two to twenty years, and changes as it

passes through distinct phases (Johnson, Lall, Huwe, Fallow, Holmes, & Hall, 1999; Kram, 1988; Levinson, 1978; O'Neil & Wrightsman, 1981; Phillips-Jones, 1982). Kram (1985) described four distinct phases through which the relationship passes. They are: a) initiation, b) cultivation, c) separation, and d) redefinition. While Kram prescribed specific time windows to each stage, other researchers have found similar stages occurring without regard to time.

At USNA, mentoring relationships with the interviewed faculty appear to follow a similar pattern, particularly in the first two stages. The initiation and cultivation stages often occur due to outside or extra-curricular interaction between the midshipmen and faculty. For example, the majority of the interviewed faculty (70%) were actively involved with midshipmen outside of the classroom either as faculty representatives to clubs or sports team or as advisors to a midshipman's independent research. However, the separation stage often occurs when the student ends their association with USNA rather than the mentor-protégé electing to end the relationship. Although three professors did recount experiences wherein previous protégés had stayed in touch or even made return visits, these experiences were not widely held and were rare even among those who had them.

Previous researchers (Kram, 1985; Phillips-Jones, 1982; Mullen, 1994, Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Zey, 1984) have discussed both the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of mentoring. Building on Zey's (1984) four fundamental concepts as a basis, other researchers have theorized that mentors receive four basic benefits from mentoring:

a) career enhancement by building a power base (Phillips-Jones, 1982),

b) intelligence/information wherein subordinates serve as a critical source of information for the mentor (Mullen, 1994),

c) the advisory role or the "satisfaction that comes from passing knowledge and skills on to others" (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997, p. 73), and

d) the psychic rewards such as the invigoration of new ideas and perspective the protégé provides (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997).

Elements of each of these fundamental concepts were echoed during the interviews; however, differences are apparent due to the level of involvement between the faculty and their students. First, the duration of most faculty-student relationships at USNA is one semester (approximately four months) and students are rarely able to have the same professor for more than class, therefore the faculty does not have the opportunity to build a power base from the students. Secondly, although the midshipmen can help educate the faculty about the military/social aspects of USNA, it is unlikely that the midshipmen would serve as a critical source of information for the mentor as Mullen (1994) proposed. The remaining two elements, satisfaction from passing on knowledge and the psychic rewards of the interaction between the faculty and the students appear to be very rewarding for the faculty that serve as mentors.

2. Comparison to Previous USNA Studies

This is the third study to investigate mentoring relationships at USNA. The first two studies focused on mentoring from the midshipmen's perspective and used quantitative analysis of surveys as a data source. This study is the first inquiry into the mentor's perspective. This section highlights the findings of this study in comparison to the findings of the two earlier studies.

The first study, a preliminary study by Johnson, et. al., (1999) concentrated solely on third year midshipmen. Like the present study, it did not limit mentor relationships to those experienced at USNA. Even among those mentoring relationships at USNA, it did not focus exclusively on faculty-student mentoring relationships as the current study did. The second study, a more detailed survey conducted by Baker (2001), involved a random sample of 1368 midshipmen spread over the four class years.

Chapter II demonstrated that no consensus exists among researchers for the definition of mentoring. Some researchers (Bigelow & Johnson, 2001; Jacobi, 1991; Kram, 1985) have described mentoring as existing along a continuum of helping relationships, with mentoring existing at the extreme limit due to its high level of commitment between the two participants. Individuals that operate on the lower end of the mentoring spectrum, providing advice, counseling, or training without a personal investment, have been described as quasi-mentors (Jacobi, 1991). The difference then

between quasi-mentoring and "true" mentoring appears to lie more in the depth of mutual commitment and duration of the relationship than in the mentoring function provided. The findings of this study indicate that exemplary mentors at the USNA operate along this helping spectrum. However, the findings of this study reflect a personal commitment that extends past the emotional distance suggested by quasi-mentoring. While the duration of their relationships is often limited, the overriding theme is that exemplary mentors are emotionally committed to helping the midshipmen succeed professionally, personally, and academically.

In Baker's (2001) study, he found that only 45% of the respondents considered themselves to have been mentored. Seventy percent of his non-mentored respondents said they did not need a mentor. However, 74% reported that having a mentor was important and was seen as a positive experience. In the present study, the faculty rarely reported having a "true" mentoring experience with a midshipman. In this context, "true" mentoring is defined by a long-term relationship between the mentor and protégé wherein both parties benefit from the interaction, but focused on the personal and professional development of the protégé. Due to the relatively limited duration of most USNA faculty-student relationships, "true" mentoring relationship formation was rarely reported. However, the interviewed faculty appear to do more than simply conduct emotionally detached advising, as quasi-mentoring suggests. All of the professors were able to recount stories wherein they had helped, advised, counseled, or taught several midshipmen in professional, academic, or personal areas.

A misunderstanding of how mentoring relationships begin appears to be a fundamental obstacle in mentoring formation at USNA. There appears to be a problem of perception on both sides. Ninety percent of the faculty in this study reported they allowed the midshipmen to select them as mentors. In Baker's study (2001), the surveyed midshipmen reported "nearly all USNA mentor relationships were initiated by the mentor, or were mutually initiated" (p 70). This ambiguity in perceiving how mentorships do or "should" form may explain why the Baker study found that only 45% of the midshipmen reported having been mentored; and among those who reported having a mentoring relationship, 28% reported having peer mentors with more senior midshipmen. In light of these findings, it is important to educate both the faculty and the

midshipmen in the benefits of mentoring and encourage the creation of opportunities for forming mentoring relationships. Furthermore, interested faculty should consider deliberately forming mentoring relationships with potential protégés.

C. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS IN LIGHT OF EXISTING THEORY

As Jacobi (1991) pointed out, one of the underlying problems in the study of mentoring relationships is the relative lack of a unifying theory. In Chapter II, the four prevailing theories were discussed briefly. In light of the current findings, those theories are revisited below as the findings of this study are related to the existing mentoring theory.

1. Learning Involvement Theory

Learning Involvement theory argues that academic success is directly proportional to the student's involvement in the educational process (Astin, 1977; Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education, 1984). Under this model, the mentor's role is to encourage the protégé's involvement in learning. The mentor would generate opportunities for learning, such as research assistantships. In this type of program, the mentor stresses professional development over psychosocial support (Jacobi, 1991). The Trident Scholars program, independent research and department honors programs at USNA are indicative of formal programs that appear to follow this model. The three professors identified in Table 7 as having a vocational focus to their definition of mentoring would appear to best align with this theory.

However, based on the interviewed professors, the greater influence in determining whether the mentoring relationship will focus on vocational, psychosocial, or role modeling is the mentoring professor's concept of mentoring. For example, one professor who reported having a great deal of contact with midshipmen through independent research projects would be expected to have a strong vocational/career focus. However, the professor's remarks reflected a psychosocial focus in his or her approach to mentoring:

> We have independent research -- midshipmen things. So I sort of adopt them for a semester … when you're mentoring … it's a new possibility for everybody that is involved … So, you're doing more of a directing process as opposed to leading them all the way through. I think that's better for

> the person that you're mentoring because I don't think you should impose your values on someone … because everybody is a little bit different and I think they have to just, kind of, garner those things for themselves.

2. Academic and Social Integration Theory

The second model is similar to the first, but is more concerned with predicting and preventing attrition from the educational environment. Adapting Tinto's (1975) predictive model, researchers pursuing this line of reasoning argue that students who not only commit themselves to the educational process and the institution, but also integrate into both the academic and social environment will be more likely to graduate (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1977; Terenzini, Pascarella, Theophilides, & Lorang, 1985; Terenzini & Wright, 1987). Following this model, the role of the mentor is to promote the student's integration into the organization by primarily providing psychosocial support in the form of acceptance, validation, and friendship (Jacobi, 1991). At USNA, practical implementation of this theory is exemplified by a variety of social activities, ranging from the Midshipmen Black Studies Club to the Naval Academy Flying Squadron, which attempt to merge professional, academic and social development (http://www.usna.edu/MidActivities/activity.html). The faculty's involvement in social integration is in their role as faculty advisors to these activities.

Explicit evidence of this theory was more difficult to find in the current study. However, the high number of respondents active as faculty representatives (70%) to extra-curricular activities across the spectrum of academic and athletic groups indicates that there is some evidence that the interviewed faculty believed that interaction with the midshipmen outside of the classroom was important.

3. Social Support Theory

The third model, like the second, is focused on protégés' psychological and emotional well-being. The social support theory emphasizes the mentor's role in helping the protégé deal with stress through avoidance, coping, or prevention (Jacobi, 1991). While this theory focuses on protégé stress reduction or avoidance, when viewed more broadly, all members of the interviewed group gave responses that indicated that they wanted to help the midshipmen cope with their problems, be they academic, personal, or professional. Three professors in the interviewed group gave responses that indicated

they held a psychosocial focus to their mentoring approach (see Table 7). One professor in particular gave a good example of the kind of behavior he exhibited that reflects this theory:

> Just before you got here [for the interview], a mid came in and he was very apprehensive, I guess. He was saying he wanted to switch from _____ to _____. Well, some people think it would be better to be a _____ major than _____ -- O.K, so, at any rate, I was saying, "Alright, well, look, this is what we can do." And I got him the stuff and helped him fill it out and I said just --
>
> I knew he was clearly relieved to be talking to me because I was saying, "Well, we can do this." And I said, "You know, when the chit goes to the _____ department, they may not be happy. But you do have a choice to make here. And if you want to make this choice then --" So I was coaching him in terms of, "Just say that you think that you would become a better officer because of your interest --" and he is fluent in _____ and so on.
>
> Well, he had just come back, and I guess the chairman of the _____ department had written a sarcastic comment on there about [the professor's department] because the Dean has tried to encourage us to put a cap -- but the kid has a high QPR. He's a smart kid, so we'd like to have him.
>
> I was very positive, but he was just so apprehensive and just to be reassuring, you know, that, "No problem. We'll take care of it," and "It'll all work out." And, "Somebody may be unhappy, but you won't have to deal with them anymore once we get this thing through the paperwork." So I guess, I could tell that he was relieved. I wasn't stern or forbidding or acting as though he was pain in the rear-end, that he was taking my time and so on. You know, they are often very apologetic. And then they thank you. [Implying that the midshipmen shouldn't have to.] Well, that's fine.

4. Developmental Support

The fourth model draws from concepts outlined in adult development theory (Chickering, 1969; Levinson et al., 1978; Perry, 1970). Although each developmental school of thought has differences, the developmental model requires the mentor to maintain flexibility and adaptability in each of the three broad mentor functioning areas (professional support, emotional support, and role modeling) in order to help the protégé

(Jacobi, 1991). Although difficult to measure in quantifiable terms, the developmental support model is the most balanced approach and is the model that underpins the basic assumptions of this study.

All of the respondents gave responses that indicated the professors recognized the need to provide professional support, emotional support, and role modeling behaviors. For example, one professor categorized as having a role model focus recognized that "part of the role of a mentor is to help the student make professional connections." However, only three were classified as having a balanced blend between two or more of those categories (see Table 7). As stated in Chapter IV, the classification of professors was subjective. No set number of responses was used to identify which group the professor should belong to. However, all but three professors provided responses that consistently and repeatedly addressed the area to which they were assigned.

D. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSITIONS

Although this study used a relatively small sample, the following propositions summarize the general trends of the beliefs and behaviors of the interviewed faculty. These propositions reflect the overarching themes that were consistent throughout all the interviews.

1. Proposition 1.

Exemplary mentors appear to have emotional receptivity defined as empathy, compassion, self-awareness, non-defensiveness, and a desire to help others.

Consistent with other research (Jennings & Skovholt, 1999) and as depicted in Table 12, the respondents collectively indicated that they possessed helping personalities, were committed to the midshipmen, and that they made a concerted effort to make themselves both approachable and available to the midshipmen.

2. Proposition 2.

While exemplary mentors appear to have a variety of reasons for mentoring, the primary motivation is a strong desire to help others.

Consistent with other research (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997), all ten respondents discussed "helping" students. One professor succinctly summarized this idea:

> I mean, I think that's what it's all about, right? You want to help. You want get somebody on the right path.

One interesting variance from the "traditional" mentor-protégé relationship is worth noting. Three of the interviewed professors said that they felt a great deal of stress from the protégé's failure. These three professors indicated they maintained personal responsibility for the protégé's failure and gave statements that indicated that they internalized the protégé's failure as a reflection upon themselves. One professor in this group said:

> I've had relationships … where I've made suggestions and it was really their responsibility to make some changes and … they didn't choose what I was heavily suggesting and so that becomes very stressful because I think what happens is you have a tendency, I do, have a tendency to infer from that that my, what I considered important, is not important to them. And so what does that mean about -- what kind of regard they hold for you or what you say?

The remaining seven professors reported that they did not feel stress from the relationship because "They're [the midshipman] usually the one with the difficulty." This suggests that one of the results of the non-traditional mentor-protégé relationship that exists between the faculty and midshipmen at USNA is that, although the professor's provide a certain level of mentoring functionality, they are not emotionally committed to the midshipmen. In other words, the faculty are "helping" personalities but not "in" a relationship with their protégés except in rare circumstances.

3. Proposition 3.

Exemplary mentors appear to possess strong relationship skills and employ those skills in their educational techniques.

Like the subjects of other mentoring studies (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997), the interview subjects in this study use their empathy, sensitivity, and other relationship skills to assist them. While not a specific mentoring technique, all of the respondents indicated that they used their classroom setting to inform the midshipmen that they were both available and approachable. Seven of the professors related stories wherein a midshipman approached them with a non-academic problem because the student felt the professor was approachable, honest, trustworthy, and willing to help.

4. Proposition 4.

Organizational factors can inhibit or promote mentoring within an academic environment.

Consistent with finding from other research (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997), three professors addressed organization factors that appear to inhibit the development of mentoring relationships. Two professors explained that the current academic structure, wherein the midshipmen take a very restrictive core curriculum inhibits the students' ability to form traditional relationships with the faculty.

One professor explained:

> As you know, the student mids here don't have that much time and so, I think if there is one thing here that's a little disappointing is that mids don't have much time to just do the academic thing, like at another college where after class they might hang around and want to talk to you about the subject that interests them.

Another professor described the difficulty created by the class registration system:

> We also don't have a system here that really allows a midshipmen here to take a number of courses from the same professor. In fact it is almost impossible … Like the way the registration system is set-up. In the _____ department we tend to list who's teaching a particular course, but some departments don't do that … [a student can] put in for that section and they don't get it because the way our registration works, they try to balance out the sections so that Professor X might be real popular but he's not going to have 22 [students] in his section and only allow 5 in another section at the same time. So they'll move people over; and unlike a real university, you can't go and add and drop and just pick what you want. You're not allowed to do that here. So it is very hard to even have somebody you want for multiple courses.

However, the rewards for making that time investment can be very beneficial, as one professor explained:

> It's basically, it's not something that I go into a class and say I'm looking for somebody, one or two people, a number comes to mind. I just go in. And all of a sudden … I'll find myself sometimes, just in here, working with them. I'm their "mentor" on this thesis or whatever. And it never goes beyond that. We get the job done. Boom. [For] others, … we're doing this together; we're doing that. We go in town. We have a beer.

> We have lunch with somebody else. I mean, some relationships just flourish just because the two happen to mesh. And I never thought about it but I don't really sit here and evaluate myself as, "Geez, I haven't really developed a strong enough relationship with this person, because I've got too much to do. I don't have a lot of time." All of a sudden you realize, in spite of having a lot to do and not much time, you are spending [it on] this relationship, that it is phenomenal. Because it's just important. It just happens.

5. Propostion 5.

Civilian faculty did not feel they were less influential than military instructors.

One assumption the author made at the beginning of the research was that the civilian faculty would feel less influential than their military counterparts. The evidence from the interviews did not support this assumption.

Two of the seven civilian professors explicitly stated that they did not feel they were as influential or where as capable as serving as mentors as their military counterparts. One stated:

> I would think that … the people who feel much more like mentors here are people who are teaching who also wear a uniform and so they can feel that they are encouraging -- I can't mentor someone to be a Marine.

However, these two were in the minority. The remaining five civilian professors all indicated they used their knowledge of the organization and experience to assist them in mentoring midshipmen. This group recognized the differences between themselves and the military faculty but did not feel that the civilian faculty were in a deficit position. For example, one professor explained:

> I understand the institution a lot better. I understand the military a lot better. I understand their future careers a lot better. So, I think that I can be a better mentor in that way because I know a lot more about Bancroft and a lot more about the fleet. A lot more about the Marine Corps than I used to.

E. LIMITATIONS

The overall low response rate to the initial request for nominees undermines the premise that the nominees put forward were truly "exemplary." Additionally, the relatively small sample size (N=10) brings a number of limitations to the study. While

the purposeful sampling strategy used to identify the nominating sources of exemplary mentors adds credibility and reduces selection bias, the study has limited external validity as the sample is not necessarily representative of exemplary undergraduate mentors (Patton, 1990).

The present study only briefly explored the role of gender in mentoring at USNA. The present faculty of the USNA includes approximately 600 faculty members, comprised of approximately 312 civilian faculty[2] of which, 79 are women. The opinions of the two female faculty members questioned may not be generally held by the remaining female faculty. Furthermore, there was no attempt to determine if female military officers assigned as instructors at USNA shared similar experiences to the interviewed faculty. As of 30 September 2001, the USNA faculty consisted of a total of 236 military officers (both male and female) and 356 civilians. (http://www.usna.edu/IR/USNAonly/data_book/htmls/sec1_fac_dist_01.html Source: Deputy for Management (Comptroller Dept) Monthly Manpower Summary Sept 2001).

As this study was a qualitative inquiry into the beliefs and behaviors of a relatively small group, the extent to which the interviewed groups opinions extend to the broader population of faculty at USNA or other undergraduate institutions is indeterminate.

Furthermore, as Jacobi (1991) pointed out, the tendency in this study, as with other studies of mentoring, was to report what was found and use inductive techniques to analyze data. As a selected exemplary group was chosen from among the faculty, neither the availability nor prevalence (frequency) of mentors was examined.

Finally, the qualitative design of this study allowed for a moderate degree of depth of investigation and provided a large enough sample size to allow for some variance among responses. However, the design limits the researcher's ability to make statements about causal relationships or define clear correlations.

[2] This number does not include temporary faculty; Director, ITSD; Director, IR; Director, Musical Activities; Dean of Admissions; nor does it include authorized faculty billets currently not filled due to recruitment actions in progress or to faculty hired but not yet reported aboard.

(http://www.usna.edu/IR/USNAonly/data_book/htmls/sec4_fac_minority.html Source: Associate Dean for Faculty, 11/01)

F. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING FACULTY-STUDENT MENTORING

In light of the analysis conducted and findings reported, the following recommendations are submitted for consideration to improve faculty-student mentoring.

1. Education of both faculty and midshipmen

First, both the faculty and the midshipmen should receive education as to what mentoring is and what the institution expects from mentoring relationships. To do that, the institution should provide a corporate definition that is "consensually endorsed by core faculty and clearly transmitted to the students … [that] explicitly discuss[es] roles and functions of mentoring" (Bigelow and Johnson, 2001, p 13) . In drafting this definition, caution should be given to avoiding buzzwords. "Mentoring" is a mutual relationship and rarely succeeds when forced. "Mentoring" should be kept separate from other advising, counseling, and remediation efforts. Attributing mentoring to those tasks undermines the development of true mentoring relationships. The connotation difference between mentoring and advising is the same as the connotation difference between someone "doing their job" and "doing their duty."

Second, incoming faculty and prospective faculty must enter the institution with a clear understanding of the institution's expectations as well as the benefits and costs of mentoring. The training for both faculty and students should include an understanding of each phase of the relationship as well as the benefits and costs to each member of the relationship. This study found that faculty members wait to be approached by prospective protégés. Baker's study (2001) found that midshipmen wait for the prospective mentor to select them. Both parties require encouragement to pursue the mentor relationship and education on how to initiate those relationships. Finally, USNA could ask selected exemplary mentors to address new faculty members during a workshop before the start of the academic year in order to provide both education and role models for desired behavior.

2. Resource allocation

In order to increase mentoring relationships at USNA, a reallocation of resources may be necessary. The primary purpose of this reallocation would be to increase

opportunities for more interaction between students and faculty. For example, the current matrix curriculum could be reviewed to determine if opportunities exist to allow more students to take more classes with the same professor. The current faculty reward, award, and pay programs could be examined for opportunities to consider midshipmen involvement in the process.

3. Formal compared to Informal Mentoring

Based on the findings of this study, a facilitated mentoring environment appears to have the greatest chance for developing "true" mentoring relationships. Thirty percent of the faculty discussed incidents wherein traditional mentoring relationships developed out of their interaction with midshipmen while conducting Trident or honors research. Two professors discussed their experiences with the Honor Remediation program. Although both faculty members felt that the latter program was important and that they were able to make some progress in educating the "protégé," neither professor considered themselves a mentor in that role and did not describe the relationship as mentoring.

G. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study serves as an exploratory investigation of exemplary faculty mentors at USNA. It follows two previous survey-based studies: an exploratory survey of midshipmen (Johnson, et. al. 2001) and a more detailed survey of midshipmen (Baker, 2001). One recommendation for future research would be to conduct a more detailed survey of the faculty at USNA to gain additional insight into faculty mentoring at USNA. Follow-on research could use a generalized survey of the entire faculty at USNA to conduct a quantitative analysis of responses to opinions and beliefsabout mentoring. A second recommendation for further qualitative research would use a similar design to the present study, however, the design would attempt to improve the reliability of the sampling population. Using a snowball sampling (Patton, 1990) methodology, the researcher would apply a more rigorous criteria for selection of exemplary faculty mentors for participation in the study. First, Department chairs and other Division chairs and other senior ranking faculty would be asked to nominate two to three exemplary faculty. That list of names would then be distributed to the remaining faculty for voting. The faculty at large would be asked to nominate one name from the list for participation in the study. Votes would be tallied and the ten faculty members receiving the most

nominations would be invited to participate in the study. The questions used in this study could be re-examined or modified to address unique questions.

Additionally, a study of formal mentor pairings at USNA using the Trident program and the Honor Remediation program could lend insight into the most successful formal programs at the USNA. One recommended study design would be to conduct interviews of mentor-protégé pairs of faculty and midshipmen participating in both the Trident scholars program and the Honor Remediation program (either past or current) using a semi-structured interview technique similar to the one used in this study. The interview subjects responses could then be compared to determine similarities and differences in each program.

Finally, similar studies could be conducted at the other service academies in order to potentially benefit from their successes and lessons learned about faculty mentoring.

H. SUMMARY

Because mentoring relationships are mutually beneficial to both parties, the USNA should consider ways in which to stimulate the formation of these relationships and facilitate their growth and development. However, as they are also complex and time consuming, the institution cannot simply hope that they will come into being on their own. Although the current Commandant of Midshipmen has specifically addressed mentoring in his Commander's Intent (Allen, 2002), the institution may have to consider how resource allocation could help the process. There is no cookie-cutter approach to mentoring. Not all faculty members make ideal mentors. Not all undergraduate students require detailed mentoring from the faculty. However, by actively engaging the faculty in the whole process of the midshipmen's development, the Academy can only help produce a better, more capable, professional officer.

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APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT

Human Subjects Research Consent Form
Naval Postgraduate School
Leadership Education and Development Program
Letter of Informed Consent

_____

I, (print name in full) _____ am ___ was ___ a faculty member of the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD. In signing this consent form, I agree to volunteer in the Graduate Studies research project being conducted by Captain Jeffrey R. Raithel between _____ and 18 June 2002.

I understand that the research being conducted relates to the experiences of faculty members that serve as mentors to undergraduate students at the United States Naval Academy. I understand that excerpts from my written transcripts and tape-recorded verbal communications with the researcher will be studied and may be quoted in a master's thesis.

I grant authorization for the use of the above information with the full understanding that my anonymity and confidentiality will be preserved at all times. I understand that my full name or other identifying information will never be disclosed or referenced in any way in any written or verbal context. I understand that transcripts, both paper and floppy disk versions, will be secured in the privacy of the researcher's office and that any audiotapes of my conversations with the researcher will be erased no later than 30 June 2003.

I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw my permission to participate in this study without explanation at any point up to and including, the last day of June 2002.

I grant permission to use one of the following:

____ My first name only
____ Only a pseudonym

_____ _____
Signature Date

APPENDIX B: NOMINEE SOLICITATION

Dear Sir or Madam,

I request that you nominate one exemplary mentor from among any faculty member teaching at the U.S. Naval Academy and reply via email to raithel@usna.edu. You may nominate yourself. Nominees will be invited to serve as interview subjects in a qualitative research project.

I am a Naval Postgraduate School master's student in the Leadership Education and Development Program here at the Naval Academy. The topic of my master's thesis is the mentoring of undergraduate students here at the Naval Academy. I am asking for your assistance in identifying those faculty members, either civilian or military, that exemplify the concept of informal mentor. Selected nominees will be asked to participate in a qualitative study of undergraduate mentoring at the USNA from the mentor's perspective.

For the purpose of this study, mentoring is defined as a relationship of any duration between two individuals, normally differing in age and prestige, wherein the mentor serves as a guide, role model, and counselor to develop the protégé.

The primary research question to be answered is "What are the most descriptive beliefs and behaviors among highly regarded mentor exemplars within the USNA faculty?"

Selected nominated faculty members will be invited to participate in the study, consisting of audio taped one-on-one personal interviews.

The results of this study will be published in a Master's thesis during the summer of 2002.

The United States Naval Academy Institutional Research Board has approved this research project.

Thanks in advance for your assistance in this research. I look forward to receiving your nominations.

Sincerely,
Jeffrey R. Raithel
Capt USMC
Lead Program

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    Annapolis, MD

12. LEAD Program, ProDev
    U.S. Naval Academy
    Annapolis, MD

13. Ralph Brown Draughon Library
    Auburn University
    Auburn, AL